



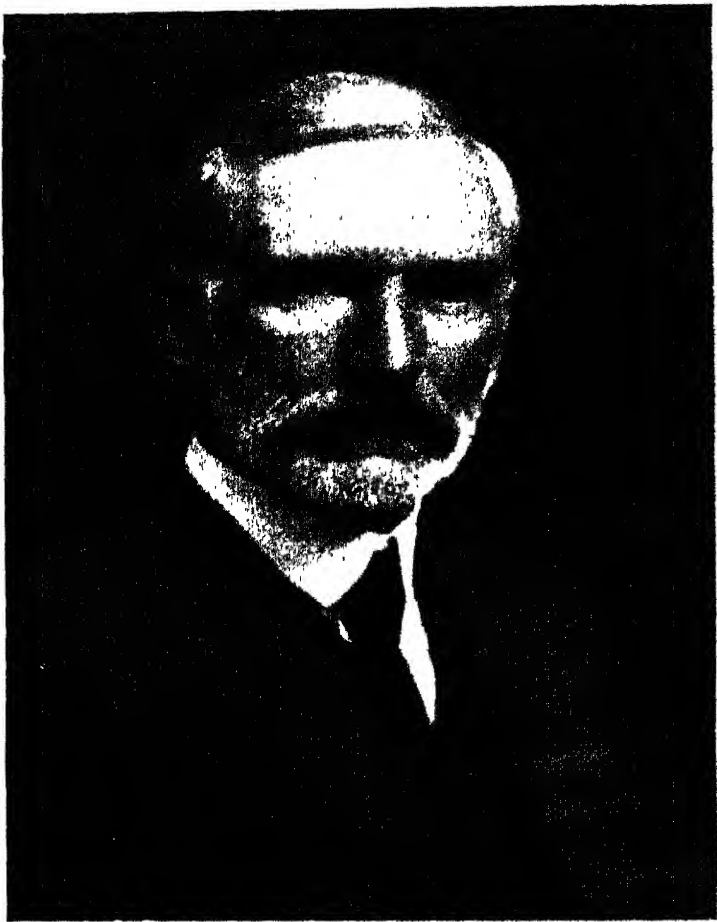
MORE AND MORE  
OF MEMORIES

by Arthur Porritt

LIFE OF DR. J. H. JOWETT  
THE BEST I REMEMBER  
J. D. JONES OF BOURNEMOUTH  
THE STRATEGY OF LIFE  
ETC.







11/10/00

Charles Dornith

# MORE AND MORE OF MEMORIES

by

ARTHUR PORRITT

former editor of "The Christian World"

*As we get older life more and more comes  
to consist of memories and the Great Hope*

From a letter written by General Smuts to  
the widow of Dr. G. H. Morrison of Glasgow

London

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1947  
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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN  
*in 12 point Bembo type*  
BY UNWIN BROTHERS LIMITED  
LONDON AND WOKING

To my sons  
NORMAN and BRIAN  
whose filial devotion has  
made glad my evening years



## PREFACE

TWENTY years ago I wrote a book of memories and called it "The Best I Remember." It was not a very serious book: but it found friendly readers at home and across the seas, and made some of them friends of mine. Now it is out of print, and I have seen it marked "scarce" in second-hand booksellers' catalogues. That book was not written for publication—which came about accidentally, and through no initiative of mine—but to while away the dreary hours of slow convalescence from an illness. My excuse for writing this book of more memories is not dissimilar. These patternless reminiscences of a long, happy, and not uneventful life—a life wealthy in human friendships—have been gathered together to assuage a sense of aloneness.

Some of the memories may seem trivial, and some may strike readers as frivolous, or even flippant. I make no apologies, unless perchance—and far from any wish of mine—I have unconsciously trampled on someone's tender feelings. Nor do I apologize for the autobiographical passages in these pages since (although I have achieved nothing to justify me in writing an autobiography) the memories of my boyhood in a Lancashire industrial town recall an age that has passed, and picture conditions of life that have gone beyond recall.

King George III having accepted, very reluctantly, an oft-repeated invitation to visit Mr. Whitbread's brewery, made a note to "remember to forget to ask old Whitbread to dinner." Remembering to forget is almost an essential factor in the art of writing reminiscences, just as forgetting to remember is one of the secrets of happiness in old age. I hope these pages bear some traces of both that art and that secret.

In penning these memories I have often lamented that I never kept a diary and that I preserved so few letters and papers. "Even a tenacious memory" (runs a Chinese proverb), "is not so good as a little pale ink on paper." The stealthy approach of blindness has hampered me in writing this book, and I am deeply indebted to my friend Mrs. Ida Williams for her patience and care in type-writing it from my almost indecipherable manuscript.

Several friends, Dr. Sidney M. Berry, Mr. Ernest H. Jeffs, The Rev. Henry Atkinson, Dr. W. J. Shergold and my cousin, Joseph Hawthorn, have laid me in their debt by reading the typescript and by making helpful suggestions.

Especially I am indebted to Dr. Henry Bett for making a final revision of the typescript, preparing the book for the press and reading the proofs.

ARTHUR PORRETT

GREAT BOOKHAM,

*July, 1945*

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## EARLIEST MEMORIES

*A Road Accident—Memory lost and regained—Childhood and boyhood in an industrial town—My Father and Mother—A Puritan home—Bitter sectarianism—Victorian Sundays*

THE genesis of this book of memories was a street accident. On Saturday afternoon in November 1935—it was the day of the Lord Mayor's Show—I stepped briskly across the pavement outside the National Liberal Club, passed between two parked motor-cars—and recovered consciousness to find myself lying on my back in the Club vestibule, with two of the Club servants mopping blood off my face and hands. I had come off worst in an encounter with a taxicab, which had surreptitiously seeped through from the Embankment after Whitehall Place had been closed for traffic. Then I felt myself losing consciousness again and thought it was surely the end of me. Dimly I remember thinking that death was not so terrible a thing if it came so gently. When next I came to myself I was in an accident bay in Charing Cross Hospital, and a young student surgeon was fixing sticking plaster on my nose. Then he left me to join a little group of nurses who were standing on a hot water radiator under a window watching the Lord Mayor's Show go by. Mine was just an ordinary accident case, one perhaps of a dozen brought in that afternoon by the ambulances. After the Show had gone by one of the nurses, who called me "Old Dear," wheeled me into another ward, gave me some sal volatile, and assured me that I was all right, but had better call on the following Thursday to have the stitches taken out of my hand. Then after handing me my hat, coat, and attaché case, she pointed me the way out of the hospital. Clutching the wall to steady my strange dizziness, groped my way down a long passage and reached the street. A taxi-cabman hailed me, and I got into the cab, saying "Waterloo." From that moment my memory went blank. I have no recollection of the taxi-cab journey to Waterloo, or of paying the cabman

or of finding my train for Leatherhead, or of the twenty mile train journey, or of the half mile walk from Leatherhead Station to the omnibus halt, or of the omnibus journey to Bookham. I came to life again when I saw that the omnibus was passing the door of my own home.

Half an hour later my clever young doctor, a genius at diagnosis, was running his long sensitive fingers over my head, returning again and again to a spot just above my collar at the back of my neck. "Yes" he said quietly, "you go to bed at once and stay there for a week." He had diagnosed a fracture at the base of the skull. An X-ray examination confirmed his diagnosis. Really I had no right to have survived the injury I had received. Very few do. The week in bed extended to twelve weeks, during which many strange things happened to me. I discovered that my senses of taste and smell had gone, and that my eyes were playing me very queer tricks. They refused to focus at the same point. I could read the large type headlines in "The Times" with either eye separately but could scarcely read anything with both eyes open together. My memory, I found, was treating me wickedly. I could not remember the internal geography of my own home. I tried, in vain, to puzzle out the way I should have to turn if I went outside my bedroom door. I seemed to lose all sense of values. Things of to-day had no importance to me; things of long ago came back to my mind and seemed to have immense significance. A General Election took place while I lay in bed: but I could not for the life of me remember what issues were at stake. King George V died, and that historic event seemed to be no concern of mine. The encounter with a taxicab on the day of the Lord Mayor's Show, had for all practical purposes cut me out of life while I lay helpless in bed.

But while the present and the immediate past grew more and more remote from my consciousness, until my life seemed to have lost its context, I found that vivid memories of my early childhood, sixty years before, came flooding involuntarily upon me—trivial recollections of tiny incidents that had, no doubt, been tucked away in my subconscious mind for six decades, and never recalled in the interval. These now became very real and vital, as if they had happened yesterday or to-day. One of the

clearest of these recollections was of being taught by my mother to tell the time when I was three years of age. I remembered the kitchen of the home in which I was born, and which I have never seen since my father and mother moved into another house when I was seven. Two "wag-at-the-wall" clocks, with heavy weights hanging from them, hung on opposite walls in that kitchen. One clock went: the other had stopped short never to go again. From the clock that would not go the weights had been removed, and my mother used the clock face to teach me how to tell the time—she moved the hands two or three times each morning and explained how the position of the hands on the clock face indicated the hours and minutes. I remember being thought a prodigy by admiring relations because I could tell the time before I was three years of age.

Somehow this remembrance led my out-of-focus memory to revive recollections of learning to read before I was four. Then other distant memories became more and more real to me—the memory of going to my first infant school, and of the long road between the forge and the wire-drawing sheds along which I had to walk to that school. One bitter childish memory flashed back, fresh and poignant, over the intervening sixty years. My grandmother had given me a new whip-top, and I had taken it in the pocket of my knickers to school. The schoolmistress—I remembered her name: it was Woodward—called me to her, drew the whip-top out of my pocket, put it on her table and said, "I'll take care of this for you, Arthur." *And she never gave it me back.* It was my first childish grievance against life, and I never forgave Miss Woodward. When I was moved up into the upper school I never spoke to her again. If I saw her in the street I looked in another direction to avoid having to raise my cap to her. I think it is the only resentment that, in all my life, I ever harboured for long. It is part of my philosophy that grievances should be forgotten as quickly as possible for the sake of one's own happiness.

As I regained strength and crept back to pick up the threads of life as it went on around me, I found that memories of early life in my Lancashire home town continued to flow back into my mind, and refused to be dismissed. The fracture at the base of my skull brought other painful consequences in its train, including

the virtual closing of my professional career, and some years of life as a semi-invalid. But it was an experience that had its compensations. It emancipated me from the slavery of the clock, it left me free to write a little when the mood prompted me, and to read more books of my own choosing, and, above all, to think and reflect. It made me able to share the feelings of an Irish workman in New York who was left a legacy—just sufficient to live on—by an uncle. Having always been knocked up at 5 a.m., and told it was time to get up and go to work, he insisted on being called as usual at the same early hour, and on being told that he must get up and go to work, and invariably he replied each morning "Ah, to the devil wid ye. I won't get up, and go to work. I don't have to."

My early years, to which my memory carried me involuntarily back, are happy in retrospect. I am one of the fortunates who can truly say that my parents never gave me a moment's anxiety. My father and mother were godly folk, and I reverence their memory. One of my aims in life has been to try and be worthy of them.

All my memories of my childhood are pleasant and unclouded. Given my choice for a second spell of life I would choose my own father and mother as my parents, and I would choose the home they made for my brother, my two sisters, and myself for my upbringing again. It was a simple working-class home, but it is hallowed in my memories. My father was a highly skilled mechanical engineer, with charge of two departments in a great engineering concern. But he was never paid more than £2 a week. How my mother managed to keep up the delightful home in which we were reared, has always been a marvel to me. But my mother had a capacity for making half a crown do the work of half a sovereign. Of course (as an American said to an Englishman who was casting doubt on the story that George Washington had thrown a dollar across the Potomac) money went further in those days! And the nine-roomed house in which we lived was my parents' own property—it had been bought through a Building Society. The cost of living sixty-five years ago was, it seems to me, ridiculously low. The best coal cost nine shillings a ton, new laid eggs were fourteen or even sixteen for a shilling,

and fresh Cheshire farm-butter was tenpence (sometimes less) a pound. Sirloin, or standing rib, of prime English beef was ninepence a pound. Cheshire cheese was eightpence a pound and milk threepence a quart. Out of her £2 a week my mother was able to place a standing order with the leading butcher in the town for a weekly joint of five pounds of best beef. When the price of salmon fell below a shilling a pound—as it often did—we had salmon. Herrings, at two for three halfpence, we had far more frequently. For Sunday's dinner there was the joint, a Yorkshire pudding, two vegetables and a milk pudding, or a fruit-pie, on Monday and Tuesday there was cold beef, on Wednesday a Lancashire hot-pot (or lobscouse), on Thursday and often on Friday a steak pie or pudding, and on Saturday what my mother called an "odd dinner." That was the weekly sequence. Porridge and bacon for breakfast, freshly baked cakes (or oaten cakes) for tea, and Cheshire cheese for supper—so the menus ran. My mother baked her own bread, and on baking day we generally had delicious hot potato cakes for tea. Always there was home-made jam, jelly, and marmalade in the larder and a stock of home-pickled walnuts, red cabbage, onions, and gherkins. We had not a tin-opener in the house, nor a cork-screw, and alcohol did not come into our home. My father did not smoke. My mother possessed a sewing machine, and made good use of it. She was a splendid needlewoman. Until I was twelve she made all my clothes, and I was never ashamed of them, because she bought the best cloth, and fitted me carefully and skilfully. Mother, always fastidious about footwear, had my boots made to measure, carefully fitted, and hand-sewn; to that I owe, I think, my lifelong immunity from corns, bunions, or other foot troubles. Until I left home at the age of eighteen I had never worn a shirt that my mother had not made, nor stockings or socks that she had not knitted. She knitted as she read, in moments of leisure, but she did most of it in the early evenings while my father read the newspaper aloud. My mother had an ingrained prejudice against slang, and none of us ever dared to use a Lancashire dialect word in her presence. She was very precise in her own speech, and she was particular about her dress—she always had a "black silk" for special occasions. I heard her



say once that during their forty years of married life she had never let my father come home from his work and find her in the clothes she wore when going about her daily household duties. For the evening she always put on a little white lace cap with just a flash of coloured ribbon on it. She made almost a fetish of punctuality, and I am sure it is due to her emphasis on this that I can claim never to have missed a train through unpunctuality, or failed to keep an appointment at the exact time for which it was fixed. Still my early home discipline had nothing repressive about it. It was firm but kind, and I have reaped benefit from it all my life. I am truly thankful for my Victorian upbringing, and for the Puritan home in which I was reared.

One of my earliest memories is of listening to my father reading aloud to my mother the reports of Gladstone's speeches in the Midlothian Campaign, and the debates in Parliament in the late 'seventies. I was a small boy of eight when Gladstone formed his Cabinet of all the talents in 1880, but I could have named every minister and his office in the Government at that time, and I can still remember most of them. My political education began in those far away days when John Bright, Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Randolph Churchill, Bradlaugh, Parnell, and Dilke were the Parliamentary figures of the day. I heard their speeches read as we sat around the fire in my Warrington home—my father reading and my mother knitting. Her fingers were never idle.

I am almost at a loss how to describe the manner of man my father was. He came of Huguenot stock—tracing his ancestry to a refugee from religious persecution who landed in East Anglia after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, with a spinning wheel and a handloom, and bringing with him the secret for bleaching woollen blankets white. The Trade Guilds of East Anglia did not welcome refugee spinners and weavers, and our Huguenot ancestor ultimately made his way to East Lancashire. Setting up his blanket making business at Bury he founded, in a small way, a family concern which still exists and (as a Limited Liability Company) now dominates three good-sized East Lancashire towns. My father's father's devotion to Bury New Road Congregational Church—where he was a deacon and Sunday

School Superintendent—led him to refuse to leave Bury when his partners moved the mill into the hill country away from the town, and he became a wage-earner, known far and wide for his peculiar skill in assessing, by his fingers, the quality of wool in its raw state. My father served his time as an apprentice to mechanical engineering, particularly the making of cotton mill machinery. He had just married when the American Civil War broke out, and put a sudden stop to the supply of raw cotton from the Southern States. The Lancashire cotton trade was brought to a standstill and the operatives “clemmed” (i.e. starved) for three years. Everybody suffered: but the sturdy Lancashire folk, stamped with the love of freedom, stood firmly for the cause of Lincoln and the Northern States against the slave-owning Confederate States. Abraham Lincoln, in a letter to a working man of Manchester, described the Lancashire operatives’ firm stand for liberty as “an instance of sublime Christian heroism which has not been surpassed in any age or in any country.” In those bleak Cotton Famine days my mother and father did not escape privations, though their trials were eased by short periods of work for my father at Gloucester and Swindon, where skilled engineers were in demand for railway engine construction. One of my most vivid memories is of my father telling how when the American Civil War ended, and the first cargo of raw cotton reached East Lancashire, the half-starved operatives dragged a wagon load of the newly arrived cotton to the top of a hill near Bury, and setting fire to it, sang, with tears streaming down their faces, “Praise God from whom all blessings flow,” as they made their oblation to the Lord for the opportunity to earn their livelihood once more.

My father and mother on returning to Lancashire made their home in Warrington, and there they lived to the end of their long lives. Theirs was a beautiful relationship—a marriage, I often think, made in heaven. I never heard my father say a cross or impatient word to my mother—or, indeed, to anyone else—but I never saw him kiss my mother, except once, when she was going to pay a visit to my brother then living in America. My father had a singularly equable temperament. He was never perturbed, or irritated. No saint could have been more serene.

He had three absorbing interests—pride in his craftsmanship, love of his home and family, and devotion to Wycliffe Congregational Church and his Sunday Afternoon Men's Bible Class. I was a deacon of the Church, and so respected by his fellow deacons and minister that when he was laid aside by illness for prolonged period the deacons' meetings were sometimes held in his bedroom, with his fellow deacons sitting around his bed. He sang in the choir and never missed a choir practice. But first and foremost in his Church-life came the Men's Bible Class, which he conducted on Sunday afternoons for many years. I doubt whether many such classes exist to-day. It was a class for adult men, forty or fifty of whom gathered regularly Sunday by Sunday. To the preparation of his "lesson" for this Men's Class my father devoted his leisure hours. His knowledge of the Bible was intimate and comprehensive. I often experimented on him, and never found him unable to complete a verse, or to say from what book and chapter it came. I have known only two other laymen equally capable of this feat—W. T. Stead, and the Rt. Hon. Ernest Brown. My father's reading in preparation for his Bible class made him familiar not only with the two or three hundred well-selected books which he had somehow collected, but with the content of the Warrington Borough Library, whose custodian once told me that he could scarcely find a book in the library (apart from fiction) which my father had not read. I must say that my father was rewarded for his devotion to his Men's Class by the loyalty and affection given to him in return. It used to be said that half the members of Warrington Town Council had been through John Porritt's Men's Class. When, having lost a leg, my father went about in a hand-propelled tricycle, the Town Council spontaneously passed a resolution authorizing him to ride on the footpaths and in the park. I possess and prize a writing desk presented to my father by his Men's Class in 1871, and the first signature is that of a man who later became Mayor of the Borough and a director of Messrs. Lever Brothers. Another family treasure, now mine, is a set of half a dozen thin cut-glass tumblers, beautifully decorated with floral designs and with the initials of my father, mother, brother, sisters, and myself engraved on the glasses—the parting gift of a highly skilled glass-cutter who

was severing his association with the Men's Class on leaving Warrington.

The men belonging to the Class (many of them were married men with families) would come to see my father at home seeking his advice on their personal or domestic concerns. They were wise enough, I hope, not to ask his advice about money matters, as no one on earth could have been a more incompetent adviser on finance. For my father was utterly without any money sense. He never carried a penny in his pocket. "I leave everything to do with money to mother," he used to say. If he had had any money in his pockets the first beggar he met would have got it, if he had a smooth tongue and a plausible lie to tell.

My father's nature was simple, and so was his religious faith. Though devout he disliked pictistic talk, and one man in his Class who became a Plymouth Brother and exuded pious phrases was, I am sure, a sore trial to my father with all his patience. He was an old-fashioned Evangelical. His hero was St. Paul. He had his modern heroes—Gladstone, John Bright, and Joseph Chamberlain, the last of whom he followed in his opposition to Gladstone's Home Rule Bill.

My father lived long enough to shed his fear of the Higher Criticism of the Bible, which at first had shocked all his sensibilities, but never disturbed his serene and unswerving belief in the Evangelical doctrines. Darwinian evolution crashed upon him—he took a lively interest in scientific matters—with bewildering effect at first; but somehow he adjusted his faith in the Genesis story of creation to the evolutionary hypothesis, and went calmly through that period of theological unsettlement. I think that a book by Draper on the conflict between theology and science helped him over that awkward stile. Though my father always lived on the uplands where simple faith held fast, he had an almost uproarious sense of humour, and I have seen tears of laughter stream down his cheeks as he read "The Pickwick Papers." He loved to read aloud Ben Brierley's Lancashire dialect stories, especially the one called "A' neet in a grave." He had the good sense to prefer Dickens to Thackeray, and he appreciated the delicate humour of Jane Austen. He saw the fun in Artemus Ward, but liked Mark Twain better. My mother had scarcely

any sense of humour, and the only criticism I ever heard my father pass upon her was his teasing remark, "O Mother, you are slow to see a joke!" when he had read aloud something humorous and failed to draw a smile from her. Mother's lame excuse was always the same, "You see, Father," she would say, "I like something historical." My mother's love of "something historical" was a moulding influence on my brother, my sisters, and myself. She came of very old Cheshire yeoman stock—the Longshaw family, which either took its name from, or gave its name to, the Longshaw Estate which is mentioned in Domesday Book, and is now a National Trust property. The Longshaws farmed a widespread estate at Radish Hall, Grappenhall, near Warrington: but the estate was broken up and the family scattered after the Repeal of the Corn Laws. I quite well remember my grandmother who was born in the first decade of the nineteenth century (*circa* 1802) and I can recall the shock I got—it was, perhaps, the first real shock I ever had—when I heard her say that when she was a girl she saw, hanging in chains, the body of a man who had been hanged for stealing a sheep. I have no remembrance of my grandfather, but we were always told that he was in the Yeomanry reserve at Waterloo, and in the Yeomanry who charged at Peterloo, when an orderly Manchester crowd, gathered to hear Orator Hunt, was mercilessly mowed down. As a family we took no pride in grandfather's share in that ghastly massacre. Perhaps in sheer revulsion, we all grew up to be ardent Liberals, then Radicals, with leanings towards Labour. Peterloo was one historical event which my mother chose to regard as of no importance. Nothing else historical failed to excite her interest. She knew all about the Kings and Queens of England, from Saxon days to Victorian times, and she was almost an *Almanack de Gotha* concerning the genealogical tree of our Royal family and all their Continental connexions. Ecclesiastical history was not outside her range of interests, and anything about the Cathedrals and Abbeys of England was meat and drink to her. Nor did Parliamentary history and customs come amiss. My brother, Edward Porritt, the author of "The Unreformed House of Commons" (now recognized as the standard history of Parliament prior to the Great Reform Act) at one time Professor

of English Constitutional History at Harvard University, always attributed his consuming zest for historical research and writing to the interest aroused in him when he was a very small boy by the stories told him by mother, drawn from her rich stores of historical knowledge. When she was well over sixty I took her into Westminster Abbey, and all over the Houses of Parliament (with a friendly M.P. as cicerone) and she peopled the places with historical personages. She was living in history. I never saw her quite so happy. Later that day I took her to see "Charley's Aunt," but the riotous farce did not provoke a smile on her face. "You know," she said half-apologetically, "I like an historical play better." I had forgotten. I should have taken her to see "A Royal Divorce" (which was running at the time). She would have revelled in the melodrama of Napoleon's divorce from Josephine. That pitch would have been familiar ground to her.

Though my mother's ancestral tradition, religiously, was Church of England, and though she never wavered in her love of "The Church," she shared my father's devotion to Wycliffe Congregational Church, of which she was a loyal member and a staunch supporter. She knew by heart the collects and prayers in the Book of Common Prayer, and she made all her children familiar with that noble liturgy. Occasionally—at Christmas or Easter Day—she would go to the Parish Church, and take me, then a small boy, with her. On Sunday afternoons she read the psalms and collects for the day. So our home was wholly free from sectarian prejudice, though we lived in a town where bitter sectarianism was rampant. "Church" and "Chapel" people in Warrington lived in different hemispheres. They did not collaborate in any form of work. Socially they stood wide apart. When I left home at the age of eighteen I had never had a meal, nay, not even a cup of tea, in the house of a member of the Church of England. The line drawn between Church and Chapel was never crossed by either. We were "Dissenters," and that was the end of it. "Church" and "Chapel" might have been drawn together by a common hate—anti-Roman Catholic prejudice. This was almost malignant. There were two types of Roman Catholics in the town and they were kept asunder. In South-West Lancashire there were many old county families of Roman

Catholics who had held their lands from pre-Reformation times. These old Catholic families had their own private Chaplains living in their homes, but they seriously concerned themselves about the spiritual needs of the Irish immigrants who flowed into South-West Lancashire and North Cheshire to work in the hay and corn harvest. These immigrants came by boat to Liverpool, and tramped to Warrington, staying over Sunday for Mass before scattering to the farms. In growing numbers the Irish immigrants got jobs in the ironworks at Warrington. They were not altogether desirable settlers. The men were rough and often drunken: the women were slatternly and uncouth. They made their homes in one quarter of the town, which became a slum: they created a problem for the municipal authorities, especially the sanitary inspectors. The English Roman Catholics did not fraternise with the Irish Roman Catholics, while the Protestants ("Church" and "Chapel" alike) held both at arm's length. Twice at General Election times—in 1885 when Parnell ordered Irish Roman Catholics to vote Tory, and in 1886 when he reversed the order and commanded them to vote for the Gladstonian Liberal—each political party courted the favours of "The Papists" (as they were usually dubbed) at the polling booths. It will be seen that in my boyhood in Warrington religion was a divisive factor, without any softening influence on the corporate life of the townspeople. Members of each denomination were loyal to their own Church, and utterly disregarding of other churches. As I glance back from these more spacious days when the growing spirit of Christian unity is making "1662 and All That" almost obsolete, the acute religious differences amid which I spent my boyhood take on, in retrospect, the aspect of a nightmare.

Wycliffe Congregational Church, of which my father was a deacon, was at the height of its prosperity in my childhood. Its minister, the Rev. John Yonge, was acknowledged to be the best preacher in Warrington, and his congregations filled the building, which seated a thousand people. Only disreputable people, it was then thought, did not go to church on Sundays. The austerity of the Victorian Sunday went unchallenged. Yet the Sundays of my boyhood were not irksome or tedious. The routine was Sunday

School at 9.30, morning service at 10.30: afternoon Sunday School 2.0, evening service, 6.30. The intervening hours were filled by reading, a short walk, hymn-singing round the piano-forte, and meals. My Sunday reading was subjected to a mild censorship. Dickens was forbidden; "The Pilgrim's Progress" was allowed. I could always find lively reading in the "Epitome of the Week's News" in "The Christian World" and in "The Boy's Own Paper" (which was allowed, perhaps, because it was a Religious Tract Society publication). But a source of unending joy for me was what we called the "big book"—a large scrap book of pictures and articles about the Franco-Prussian War (1870) cut out of the "Illustrated London News." That was a quarry indeed. My mother always encouraged us to bring in a friend for tea, and family friends would sometimes come in for supper. So we were never short of company.

In the matter of church-going I had rather a roving disposition. With ready parental permission I frequently, as a boy, attended the Sunday evening service at the Unitarian Chapel, where the preaching was always stimulating, and even more frequently I went to evensong at St. Paul's Church—an Anglican Church of an Evangelical type where the music was always good. I was never inside a Roman Catholic Church. As I have already said, I had no sort of quarrel with the Victorian Sunday. It was quiet and refreshing, even to a boy who certainly had no precocious sense of spiritual values. I would gladly escape from the rackety modern Sunday and return to the restful Sunday of my boyhood. In one respect I am still a Sabbatarian—I try to avoid causing any non-essential work on Sundays, and only sheer necessity ever makes me travel by omnibus or railway on a Sunday.



## INDUSTRIAL TOWN LIFE

*An Historic Town—Local Patriotism Quenched The "Athens of England"—How Education suffered Cricket in the "Eighties" "Sweet and Bitter" election fights—A glimpse of the law*

HISTORY as it was taught at my school in Warrington was a mere matter of dates, monarchs, wars—civil and foreign—and very little else. We were kept in blissful ignorance of the history of our own town, though Warrington has figured sufficiently in the history of England to justify some genuine civic patriotism. In the times of the early Britons it was a ford-town of some consequence and known as Varatin. Under the Romans, as Varatinum, it was a cavalry camp of the Twentieth Legion. At the time of Domesday Book survey it was a walled town called Walenteine. The Normans made it a stronghold. The Black Friars of Weryngton built the Parish Church—dedicated to St. Elphin—one of whose windows bears the name of Simon de Montfort, the founder of our British Parliament. A reference to Friar Penker, one of the Warrington Black Friars, is made by Shakespeare in "Richard III" (III. 5). The town has had a market and a fair since 1292, and in 1526 a free Grammar School was founded under the will of Sir Thomas Boteler where "men's sons might learn to know Almighty God" and "become clear lanthorns in the county round about." Warrington was the venue of one of the decisive battles in the war between Roundheads and Cavaliers. Cromwell tarried three days at a house in the town, and from his lodging wrote an historic despatch to the Speaker of the House of Commons, reporting that his Ironsides, numbering 8,600, had beaten "in all 21,000" of the enemy. "So," wrote Cromwell, "you may see and all the world acknowledge the great hand of God in this business." In 1662 the Rector of Warrington, the Rev. Robert Yates, ejected from his living under the Act of Uniformity, became the pastor of the Presbyterian Church, which (as a Unitarian Church) now worships

in Cairo Street Chapel. Judge Jeffreys held one of his "Bloody Assizes" in Bewsey Hall, Warrington, in 1684. How one's historical imagination might have been kindled if these stirring episodes in the story of our own town had been pictured for us in my school days! They were ignored—we were just stuffed with dates which we memorized in haste and forgot at leisure.

We schoolboys might possibly have been induced to take a little pride in our dirty, smoke-drenched industrial town if we had been told in school that in the latter half of the eighteenth century (1757 to 1786) Warrington came to be known as "The Athens of England" because at that time a Dissenting Academy (whose plain red brick building many of us passed every day) kept the flame of learning alive when the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were, scholastically speaking, at their very nadir. We might have been thrilled to know that Dr. Priestley, who discovered oxygen, and unravelled some other of the secrets of chemistry, taught for seven years in Warrington Academy, which had been founded to give sound learning to the sons of Protestant Dissenters who were denied access to the Universities because of their dissent. For nearly thirty years, by virtue of this Academy, Warrington was a pre-eminent intellectual centre. In later years when we had grown up we should have had a legitimate pride in knowing that the traditions and library of Warrington Academy are perpetuated in Manchester College, Oxford. There are good reasons for believing that Marat the French revolutionary (who, as all schoolboys know, was murdered in his bath by Charlotte Corday) was a tutor of languages at the Academy. Malthus, the progenitor of the scientific study of population, was certainly a pupil there. Some of the streets of our town might have become a matter of interest to us boys if we had been told that the names they bore—Aikin, Priestley, Wakefield, etc.—were the names of teachers at the Academy in its halcyon days. It might have quickened whatever interest we had in poetry if we had been told that Mrs. Barbauld, a celebrated poetess in her day—Wordsworth said of her poem entitled "Life" that "he wished he had written those lines"—was the daughter of Dr. Aikin, and spent her girlhood at the Academy. We were never told that one of the earliest and best printing

houses in England, the Eyres Press, a worthy rival to John Baskerville's press at Birmingham, was at Warrington, and that John Howard lived in our town while his famous book "The State of the Prisons of England and Wales" was being printed at the Eyres Press. And certainly we schoolboys would have been thrilled if we had been told how William Eyres, secretly and unaided, and at night, set up the type for an edition of Tom Paine's "The Rights of Man." Warrington thus had a conspicuous part in the development of the art of printing in England.

No one told us that James Glazebrook, the Vicar of St. James's Church, started a Sunday School in Warrington in 1779, five years before Robert Raikes founded his Sunday School at Gloucester. Again, the sons of Methodists would assuredly have learned with interest that John Wesley frequently visited Warrington (recording in his "Journal" on one occasion when he preached that, "I believe all the young gentlemen of the Academy were there") and after saying that on his first visit he found "a wild staring people, who seemed just ripe for mischief," recorded on a later visit that "at last there is reason to hope that God will have a sturdy people even in this wilderness." The Congregationalist, Baptist, and Presbyterian boys at my school would, I am sure, have been interested if they had been told that the Chapel at Hill Cliffe (a hillock just south of the town) claimed to be the oldest Nonconformist meeting house in England—even though later in life they might discover that the Congregational Church at Horningsham, near the Marquess of Bath's seat at Longleat, and erected in 1566 for, and by, the Dutch stonemasons who built that stately mansion, had a still earlier origin. And what Warrington boy would not have swollen with a sense of pride if he had known that watchmakers in our town had led the world in that craft, making the first English lever watch, the first pendulum clock, and the first repeater watch; that a Warrington cotton mill was the first to be run by a steam engine; that the sails of Nelson's fleet that won the Battle of Trafalgar were woven in Warrington; and that no town in England could rival Warrington in the variety and multiplicity of its industries. It might have amused them to be told that the Mersey—a sluggish, evil-looking stream, as foul as a sewer with the effluents of mills and

factories, was once famous for its salmon, and that Warrington apprentices were protected by their articles of indenture from being fed on salmon oftener than twice a week. They might, too, have been pleased (if they had known it) to tell their friends from Liverpool and Manchester that Warrington had an older market-place than Manchester, and that at one time it was quite common to say "Liverpool, near Warrington." We schoolboys might have been sufficiently interested in books to learn, with satisfaction, that Warrington had the first rate-supported Municipal Free Library in England and—as all boys at that time came under the spell of missionaries—we should have liked to know that it was when walking over Warrington Bridge that Robert Moffat (then a gardener at Leigh: later the father-in-law of David Livingstone) saw a poster advertising a missionary meeting and then and there resolved to be a missionary himself. But all these things were concealed from us, and it was not till years later that I learned the story of my native town, first from attending meetings of the Warrington Literary and Philosophical Society, and then from the writings of a proud old Warringtonian (Alderman Arthur Bennett). There was no local patriotism in the Warrington of my boyhood. Who was there to fan the flame? The mill owners and industrial magnates took care to make their homes far away from the smoke and grime of the busy town. They were as much absentee landlords as the landlords of Ireland. The Industrial Revolution not only marred the face of the once beautiful old town, it overlaid the records of the worthy part Warrington once played in our rude island story.

Possibly as schoolboys we should have been too young to be interested in the literary and theatrical associations of Warrington. Mrs. Siddons is said to have made her first appearance on any stage in a barn near Warrington Market Place. Sheridan is credited with having found the prototype of Mrs. Malaprop in a woman who lived at Bewsey Hall (in my boyhood a shooting-box of the Powys family, a mile or two on the Lancashire side of the town) and who was notorious locally for her "derangement of epitaphs." Madame Sarah Grand, the author of "The Heavenly Twins" (a famous "best seller" in the nineties) was in my Warrington days the wife of Major McFall the Medical Officer

at the Barracks. Fletcher, the man who applied the Bunsen burner to gas cooking stoves was, when I was very young, a dentist in the town, and I was one of his patients. For a humdrum industrial town Warrington had definitely its points of interest.

Education in Warrington, in my boyhood, suffered from the retrograde policy of the industrial magnates. The cotton mill-owners wanted children to work as half-timers in the factories; the controllers of the other large industries were afraid of rising rates if a School Board was established. So until 1902, when the Balfour Act became law, the schools in Warrington—excepting two—were badly housed, poorly equipped, and insufficiently staffed. The two exceptions were first the ancient Boteler Grammar School which (though originally founded as a Free School for poor boys) had in the process of years become the preserve of the well-to-do, with fees beyond the reach of working-class parents, and second the People's College, a British and Foreign School Society School of a higher grade standard, with such an established reputation that scholars from a radius of six or seven miles came by train to the school. I was sent to the People's College, with the hope that I should in due course, win one of the two or three annual scholarships at the Grammar School. In that hope I was sadly disappointed, for though I did well in the written examination I came down disastrously in the *viva voce* test owing, I believe, to nervousness when confronted by three formidable looking old gentlemen who called upon me to read aloud the leading article in "The Times" and then cross-examined me about its contents. I was a boy of twelve, small, shy, and, no doubt, psychologically a bad examinee.

My school days at the People's College were happy, though I lived in terror of our tempestuous headmaster, who "flew off the handle" on the slightest provocation, while his voice, when he was angry—as he often was—rose to a horrible screech. Yet I believe he was at heart a very kind man. He coached me and the other candidates for the scholarship examination, sacrificing his leisure four nights a week, and when I was ill once he called to inquire about me and left me some oranges. My most vivid recollection of him is of his perfunctory reading of the Bible at the opening of morning school, and the zest with which, imme-

diately afterwards, he whacked the boys who had come too late for the Scripture lesson. We were well grounded in the rudiments of knowledge; but at that time the whole school was vitiated by the "payment by results" system that was then the policy of the Board of Education. We were taught a little elementary Latin, but no Greek—and from that initial handicap I have suffered all my life.

When I left school—all too early—my mother's gentle pressure led me to continue my education by attending night classes in German, by getting a little tutorial help in Latin from a Cambridge graduate, and by taking University Extension courses in science, art, and literature. A highly educated man, who had served a term of imprisonment for a small act of embezzlement, coached me in mathematics, and immensely broadened my whole intellectual outlook. But I never overtook the deficiencies of my early education. Mr. Lloyd George once described himself as "a barbarian who never enjoyed the advantage of a University education." That has been my misfortune, and my sorrow, for fifty years—a deprivation for which hard systematic reading in later life has not compensated. Nothing can make up for the loss of a classical education.

We had no organized school games at the People's College until a red-headed young master named Alexander Brown—a public schoolboy himself—started a cricket team and a Rugby fifteen, as well as surmounting the problem of finding a playing-field. Another master, Hedley Fitton, afterwards a famous etcher, once took a group of us boys to the Municipal Art Gallery, and made the pictures live for us by his explanatory talk. I date my life-long delight in pictures, which has taken me to nearly all the chief picture galleries in Europe, and in Boston, New York, and Washington, to that juvenile interest inspired by Hedley Fitton. We had an old-established Cricket Club at Warrington with a fine ground upon which more than one County match had been played, and my summer Saturday afternoons were generally spent in watching our town eleven play teams from neighbouring Lancashire towns. A visit from Birkenhead Park Club was a great event, for the team generally included one or two of the Steel family—H. B. and D. Q.; but never the world-famous

A. G.—a Hornby, and a Roper. I must have been cricket-crazy at that age: but when I come to think about it I have been cricket-mad all my life.

Politically, Warrington was dominated by two breweries and scores of public houses. "The Trade" made itself influentially felt at election times. The three elections I remember were fought almost with ferocity. They were what Spencer Leigh Hughes called "stout and bitter fights, in which no tap was left unturned to secure a Tory victory." Our Conservative M.P. (a brewer) never opened his mouth in the House of Commons and rarely on a political platform in Warrington, except at election times—"You stand by me," was the burden of his only speech, "and I'll stand by you." Once in 1880 he was thrown out by a Liberal, a cotton manufacturer, who also proved a "mute inglorious Milton" when he got to the House of Commons. I very well remember the delirious excitement of Warrington Liberals when their man, John Gordon McMinnies, won with a majority of 529. I was eight at the time, lying in bed recovering from a long, dangerous illness, but I could hear the exultant yells of the crowd outside the Liberal Club, a hundred yards away, and I watched the flickering lights from the flaring torchlights playing on the ceiling above my head when the Liberal stalwarts, mad with victory, marched in procession to the newly elected member's house just across the road from my home. The Home Rule election in 1886 restored Warrington to its Tory allegiance, and until a Labour candidate stormed the citadel long after I had left Warrington the Conservative tradition of the old town was maintained.

A family crisis brought my school days to a close earlier than I (and my mother) had hoped. A very serious illness of my father, the result of an injury to his knee sustained in his occupation (there was no compensation for such accidents in those days) led, by slow stages, to the necessity for the amputation of his leg. It was thought that his working days were over (and there were no pensions in those days).

There happened to be a vacancy for a junior in the office of the leading firm of solicitors in the town, and on securing the post I left school—not yet fourteen years of age. Warrington

still possessed many beautiful old houses—the mansions of wealthy families in days gone by—and the solicitor's office in which I began my working life was a dignified and picturesque seventeenth-century house, built of dark-red bricks, standing in the corner of the market-place and next door to a fine old half-timbered public house built in 1662. In this lovely old house with panelled rooms, and some finely moulded ceilings, I worked until I left Warrington for London. And how I hated it! But I picked up a little knowledge of law—will-making and conveyancing—which has been useful, and, above all, I learned what has often stood me in good stead, to anchor myself to a desk and write for hour after hour without a break. Many times since, as a journalist, when I have had to write all through the night, I have been thankful for the discipline in stick-at-it-iveness acquired in that lawyer's office.

The very old-established firm of solicitors with whom I served had a large town and country practice, and the two senior members of the partnership of three were gentlemen to the finger-tips, with charming manners and a fine considerateness for everybody in the office. The clients of the senior partners were County family people who came to make their wills, to have their marriage settlements drawn up, and to get their domestic differences adjusted. The junior partner specialized in conveyancing, and had no aristocratic clients. He seemed to regard his chief function as making life unhappy for the whole staff in the office, especially the junior clerks, whom he bullied unmercifully. Charles Dickens would have found him a character for caricature. From him I learned one lesson out of bitter experience—to treat juniors and subordinates with the courtesy and consideration which is their birthright in a civilized community. One of the happiest days in my life was the day that I gave this junior partner notice that I was about to leave. I had been appointed an apprentice reporter on the London staff of "The Manchester Examiner" with a salary of £65 a year.



## LONDON IN THE 'NINETIES

*A Cub Reporter—"The Manchester Examiner"—C. P. Scott—My first editor—London in 1890—John Bright—Between the two Jubilees—The "naughty 'nineties"—The first London Tube—Cockney humour—The dirtiness of London—Society parades—Screaming Imperialism—Speeding up begins—The motor-car arrives—London indifferently fed—Henry Irving and Nonconformity—Music in the eighteen-nineties—Sports and amusements*

WITH irrepressible joy I shook the dust of the law office off my feet and left Warrington for London on January 31, 1890. The following day, a Sunday, I was sent to hear Charles Haddon Spurgeon preach in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, on his return, after a prolonged illness, from Mentone, where he had spent the winter. That was my first assignment as a newspaper reporter.

"The Manchester Examiner," whose London editorial staff I joined in February 1890, had had a long and distinguished history, but only a short spell of life was then before it. When in 1886 Mr. Gladstone split the Liberal Party over Irish Home Rule a group of leading dissentient Liberals—still anxious to avoid absorption in the Conservative Party—felt it necessary to acquire an influential newspaper as an independent organ expressing their views. In "The Manchester Examiner" they found what they sought. Its fortunes had been slowly declining. Dr. Dunkerley ("Verax"), though famous as a writer, had edited the life out of the paper. He had neglected its news services, and proceeded on the assumption that as long as he wrote leaders and signed articles, the paper would maintain its reputation and influence. In this he was sadly mistaken. The Liberal Unionist Group, who secured control of the paper, made an excellent choice in appointing Mr. John S. R. Phillips as editor. He was a capable all-round journalist, a writer of distinction, a man of wide culture and great personal charm. In appearance he bore a striking resemblance to Dr. Stopford Brooke. Phillips gathered a strong editorial staff around him at

the Manchester office. As London editor he appointed my brother, Edward Porritt. Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., was engaged as Parliamentary sketch writer—and a brilliant sketch he always wrote. Hamish MacCunn was musical critic. Mr. Wherry Anderson, Miss Grant Furley, Miss Alice Stronach, and Miss Honnor Morten became regular contributors to the London Letter. My "prentice han" was to be turned to reporting Parliamentary deputations and Private Bill Committees, as well as political speeches by Liberal Unionist leaders in and around London. In the summer I was to report cricket at Lords and the Oval, and to follow the Lancashire team when playing the southern counties.

The Liberal Unionists set John S. R. Phillips a prodigious task when they instructed him to produce a paper equal in all respects to "The Manchester Guardian." Fifty years ago "The Manchester Guardian" had not acquired its present world reputation, but it was moving swiftly towards its pre-eminence as an organ of opinion. Mr. C. P. Scott (the greatest journalist of my time) was already catching brilliant young writers as they came down from Oxford, and moulding them into an incomparable team. H. W. Nevinson, C. E. Montague, and G. W. E. Russell were already on the staff, and being inspired by C. P. Scott with his high ideals—particularly his ideal of a newspaper in which "criticism is free but facts are sacred." For half a century C. P. Scott made "The Manchester Guardian" the motif of his life, and he stamped it with his own integrity, fearlessness, and disregard of unpopularity in the counting house. I never knew Mr. C. P. Scott personally, and only met him casually at one or two functions; but I always saluted him as the chief of my craft—the journalist to whom all other journalists looked as a man who was everything a journalist should be. C. P. Scott was almost enslaved to his own paper, and until he was well over seventy he stayed at his desk in Cross Street every night until "The Manchester Guardian" had gone to press. Then he made his way to his suburban home on a bicycle, until his family read the Riot Act over him and insisted on a motor-car. He used to tell of being held up on his homeward way in the small hours by a punctured tyre. A policeman flashed his lamp on the scene and gave Mr. Scott a first look-over. "I

suppose you are in the printing trade," said the constable. Mr. Scott assented—"On 'The Manchester Guardian,'" he added. "Oh," said the constable, "Then I don't think much of 'The Manchester Guardian,' if it keeps a poor old buffer like you working until this time of night!"

Though John S. R. Phillips did not completely succeed in producing a daily "Manchester Examiner" equal to "The Manchester Guardian," he certainly did succeed in producing a lively and challenging rival to his great contemporary. But the cost of it exceeded the estimates of its Liberal Unionist financial backers, who had not realized that money must flow like water in the production of a first-class daily newspaper. The high standard of the paper was maintained until the near approach of the General Election of 1892—which was the primary object it was designed to serve—when it became clear that a majority, in England and particularly Lancashire, for Irish Home Rule was no longer to be feared even as a probability. Then the Liberal Unionist Group lost their zeal, and decreed that "The Manchester Examiner" should die by slow and gradual stages. Finally it was transferred to the proprietors of "The Manchester Courier," a Conservative organ with only local influence, into which it was absorbed.

London had just begun transforming herself in 1890. Lord Rosebery, quoting Cobbett, had described the sprawling Metropolis as a wen—adding that it was an "elephantiasis." My own memory of London goes back to 1887, when, as a boy of fifteen, I made a holiday visit just before the celebration of Queen Victoria's first Jubilee. London, to a boy from a provincial town, seemed a bewildering city: yet the pace of life was almost sluggish by comparison with the feverish rush of to-day. On that first visit to London in 1887 I saw John Bright. It was my first visit to the House of Commons—so familiar to me in later years. Bright was an aged man with the fires in him burning low, but he was a hero to me. I had heard my father read his speeches to my mother, and in my Lancashire home he was "the great Tribune"—"the conscience of England." Though a spent force he carried an aura still. I watched him come into the House, and I wished, ever so ardently, that he would speak. But he did not.

After the House rose I walked from Westminster to Clapham with my brother and another Parliamentary journalist, Alexander Mackintosh (now Sir Alexander Mackintosh) and a dear friend of my own, who before he retired had heard sixty Budgets opened.

Mentioning John Bright recalls a story often told by my Quaker friend Robert Marsh, who died a year or two ago at the ripe age of eighty-four. Marsh's father and mother, both Quakers, often entertained John Bright in their home. On one occasion, when Marsh was a very small boy, his mother said to him, "Robert, thee go down the garden and say 'John Bright, thy supper is ready.'" And Robert Marsh duly delivered the message in exactly the words his mother had used. Marsh was educated at the famous Quaker school at Ackworth, and for a time was a junior master there. John Bright visited the school when Marsh was a pupil, and he recalled how the headmaster gravely instructed the boys to take off their boots and walk in stocking feet past John Bright's bedroom. When Marsh came to London to set up in practice as an accountant he made his home at Epping and proposed to take out a third-class season ticket. His shrewd Quaker wife intervened. "Thee must do nothing of the kind," she said. "Thee must travel first class, then thee'll meet men who may put work in thy way." Sure enough, a few weeks later a fellow-traveller in a first-class carriage borrowed Marsh's copy of "The Times" to look at something, and the two men got into conversation. Marsh mentioned that he was just setting up as an accountant; the other man, in turn, said that he was in business, and was just looking for an accountant. So Marsh became his fellow-passenger's auditor—a remunerative job that laid the foundations of a lucrative practice. When I knew him in his later years Robert Marsh was the most prodigal book buyer I had ever known. His memory was phenomenal. He would quote long passages from speeches made by Bright, Gladstone, and Disraeli forty or fifty years before. But even Robert Marsh could never give any answer to that everlasting question, "What did Mr. Gladstone say in 1873?" He did not know. Does anyone know? Is it possible that Mr. Gladstone did not say anything in 1873? The origin of the question, as I was given it by an old

Birmingham Liberal, was that a man who had stood for three hours in Bingley Market waiting to hear Joseph Chamberlain address a densely crowded meeting, repeatedly interrupted Mr. Chamberlain with the question "What did Mr. Gladstone say in 1873?" Mr. Chamberlain was patient with his interrupter, but his audience got exasperated, and called on the stewards to "chuck that fellow out." This, the stewards discovered, was exactly what the interrupter wanted. He wanted to get out of the crush, but could not make his way through the packed crowd. What he could not do himself, the stewards did for him, to his great physical relief.

No one quotes John Bright in these days. Nor do I think his speeches are read. He lives by the one short passage in his speech on the Crimean War, which has woven its way into the verbal fabric of our race—"The angel of death is abroad in the land: you can almost hear the beating of his wings." The House of Commons heard those words fall from John Bright's lips in awed silence. Robert Marsh loved to quote a saying of John Bright's which deserves preservation, though I never heard anyone else quote it. Speaking of a politician about whose probity Bright had some misgivings he said that "while he might walk upright before his God, his attitude before his fellowmen was apt to be slantindicular."

Edna Ferber, the American novelist, says in her autobiography that anyone who was alive in Queen Victoria's reign and survived the first Great War has lived in two ages. With greater truth she might have said three ages—the Victorian, the Edwardian, and the drab age that started in 1918 and ended when the second Great War began. The decade between Queen Victoria's two Jubilees (1887-1897) was an epoch in itself. It passes my comprehension why people speak of the "naughty 'nineties." The adjective might legitimately be applied to the first decade of the twentieth century when Victorian austerity collapsed before the assaults of Edwardian extravagance, wealth-worship, and defiance of convention. London was just beginning to throw off some of its Victorianism when I came to the Metropolis in 1890. The "week-end" was coming to birth, and with it came the gradual decline of Sunday observance. My own memory of the

ten years between 1890 and 1900—and this may be a retrospective reflection rather than a memory—is that it was a decade of disillusionment, culminating in the humiliations of the Boer War, and, with it, the eclipse of nineteenth-century idealism. Though those of us who were young in the eighteen-nineties were not acutely conscious of it, we were witnessing the end of a century which had begun with radiant hopes but was ending in gloom and disillusionment. I heard Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree say, in a speech made about 1893, that “the mission of art is not to lead men through the fogs of doubt into the bogs of despair, but to point, even in the twilight of a waning century, to a great light beyond.” The phrase “the twilight of a waning century” is, as it recurs to me now, an apt and picturesque description of that last decade of the Victorian age. The golden age, as it was thought, of machinery, science, invention, expansion, and all man’s conquests of nature had brought ease and luxury to the few, but had not conferred happiness upon the many. Seared upon my memory still is the awful shock I experienced when at the request of the Rev. Andrew Mearns (the author of “The Bitter Cry of Outcast London”) I spent a week in the St. George’s-in-the-East area along with the Rev. Benjamin Sackett, a Congregational minister working in that ghastly slum district. Then I realized, for the first time, the horrible evils of sweated home-industries, and saw men and women and children living in housing conditions against which my very soul revolted. What appalled me most was the utter indifference of West London, flaunting its luxury, to East London, stinking in its filth. A subtle materialism was sapping the quality of our race. Samuel Smiles’ gospel of “get on” was hardening into the devil’s doctrine of “get on or get out.” Behind and beneath all the glitter and gaiety of the years of King Edward the Seventh’s reign there was an ominous sense of unrest and ferment and insecurity, until the Great War of 1914–1918 came and in its ultimate results established a reign of plutocracy from which the second Great War has rescued us.

London was on the march in 1890. The suburbs were spreading. A centrifugal trek was in progress. London was expanding into Kent, Surrey, Essex, and Hertfordshire, and even Buckingham-

ire. New means of transport were facilitating this outward trust.

As a reporter I was present at the opening by the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) of the first Tube in 1890. It ran from the Monument to Kennington. There was some uneasiness about the Prince making so adventurous a journey under the Thames, but nothing untoward happened. The old underground railway still carried passengers in long carriages with bare wooden seats, and with the compartments separated by partitions that went only half-way to the roof. Conversation was possible (and often occurred—in the vernacular) between passengers in opposite ends of the coach. The "Underground" was a byword for grime, noise, and discomfort. Between Baker Street and Gower Street the poisonous sulphur-laden atmosphere made one gasp, though asthmatics were recommended to make that half-mile journey as a "cure." The hansom cab with bells on the horses was the gondola of the street, but Londoner's popular means of transport was the two-horse omnibus. The omnibuses of 1890 were slow, and people to-day travelling in them would think very tedious. I revelled in omnibus riding, especially if I could get one of the much-coveted seats beside the driver. Always there was something to see in the ever-changing panorama of the streets, and the bus driver's comments on men and matters seen *en route* were often piquant, sometimes picturesque, and always shrewd. Mr. Pett Ridge, who loved the London of his time, insisted that busmen's humour was unequalled for saltiness. I heard him say that the wittiest remark he ever heard came from a bus driver in the Euston Road who overtook a hearse which had just narrowly missed running over a man. The busman looked scornfully at the hearse driver and shouted "Naw! Greedy!" I was sitting one morning next to the driver of a "Favourite" bus when there was a loud clattering on the road behind us, as if a coach and four were thundering along, but there came by us not a coach but a tiny little trap in which a very fat man was sitting, holding a whip whose lash dangled about the head of an extraordinarily small pony. My busman turned aside to see this strange sight, and in a hoarse, mocking voice asked "Been fishing?" In those days the top of an omnibus was reached by an upright iron ladder

and the seats were so placed that passengers sat back to back in two long rows. These seats were known as the "knife-board." Women never rode on the knife-board. Access by the ladder in the long skirts and voluminous petticoats that were the fashion would have been indecorous. But women often clambered up to the front seats alongside the driver.

Londoners of to-day would be shocked beyond words by the incredible dirtiness of London as I first knew it. Fleet Street, the Strand, and even Whitehall, were lined with shabby old shops, buildings and business houses. The roadways were, on rainy days, sheets of sticky, ankle-deep slime, a mixture of greasy mud and horse-dung, which the wheeled vehicles splashed over the pedestrians on the pavements. On dry days boys, commonly called "sparrow-starvers," skipped riskily amid the traffic sweeping up the horse-dung with a hand-brush and tray. Litter was thrown about everywhere. Crossing sweepers plied their trade, and shoe-blacks did a brisk business at street corners. Gas was still the street illuminant, and the lighting was poor even in important streets. To the older generation of Londoners who remember the suffocating, dense brown fogs of fifty years ago—"London particulars" we called them—the black-out in the war years paled almost into insignificance. I recall one London fog at Christmas in 1892 which lasted a full week, and was so opaque that cabmen refused to accept "fares." When that "particular" lifted nearly everybody had bloodshot eyes and sore throats. London in the early 'nineties was really a dishevelled, untidy city, crying aloud for the wash and brush-up which the new created London County Council was soon to give it. But with all its shortcomings London exercised a fascination of its own—which has somehow not survived the improving touches since bestowed upon it.

When my work kept me—as it often did in 1890 and 1891—in Fleet Street until midnight my brother and I usually caught the last "Favourite" omnibus for Upper Holloway at the Holborn Corner of Gray's Inn Road, and the journey took an hour. If we missed the last omnibus we had to walk home—a four-mile trudge along Gray's Inn Road to King's Cross, and then up the drab interminable Caledonian Road. There were always "night-



birds" about—dubious customers some of them looked—but we were never molested. Occasionally a police constable on night patrol would flash his lamp upon us as we passed, and sometimes one would stop us, but seeing that we looked a respectable couple, would say in an interrogating tone "Printer chaps?" and bid us good night. Little crowds clustered around the all-night coffee stalls, and on cold nights we sometimes fortified ourselves with a penny cup of hot coffee and a penny slab of cake. More often we would buy two hot potatoes at a night stall, and put one in each of our trousers pockets. The warmth the hot potatoes radiated was grateful, gracious, and comforting. Then as we neared home we ate the hot potatoes and were very thankful for them.

Rotten Row had, in the early 'nineties, shed none of its social glories. The afternoon parade of society in Hyde Park was one of the sights of London, and the Princess of Wales (later Queen Alexandra) was to be seen in all her loveliness on most afternoons during the season, driving in an open carriage from Marlborough House to Hyde Park Corner, for one or two turns along the fashionable drive. Men in silk hats, fancy waistcoats, and frock coats, watched the parade of society ladies—all wearing ridiculously large hats and long, trailing skirts. The feminine figure of that day resembled an egg-boiler—small waists, full bosoms, and rounded hips. A craze for bicycling in Battersea Park, which followed a short-lived spell of zeal for "slumming" (brought about by the publication of "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London") had a noteworthy effect on women's fashions in clothes and even figures. Women began to invade the robust sports, and, dressing in styles appropriate for vigorous exercises, slowly emancipated themselves from the tyranny of tight corsets and super-abundant petticoats. Slowly but surely the sartorial revolution penetrated down to the women of the middle classes. Women, in Portia's phrase, "turned two mincing steps into a manly stride," and "the woman in revolt" came into being.

The celebrations of the two Jubilees of Queen Victoria (in 1887 and in 1897) bred in the British people a swaggering, bombastic mood which must have made us very objectionable to the other great nations—though, when I come to think of it, we

did not at that time think of other nations as great. How much we had made ourselves hated was evident during the Boer War, when we experienced a "splendid isolation" which was as unpleasant as it was unsuspected. Between the two Jubilees we were drunk with power. The "crude brassiness" of Rudyard Kipling's screaming imperialism reflected the mood of the hour and inflamed it. Max Beerbohm satirized Kipling in a memorable cartoon representing him as taking "a bloomin' day out on the blasted 'eath along with Britannia, 'is gurl."

Kipling inflamed the souls of Englishmen in those flamboyant years, though he himself atoned for the mischief he had wrought by his "Recessional" (published during the second Jubilee celebrations) with its clear warning against forgetting God and putting faith in "reeking tube and iron shard." During the years between the two Jubilees we got almost nationally hoarse with singing in chorus a patriotic song called "The Soldiers of the Queen." This had its ludicrous aspect. A friend and I, cycling in the western counties, put up for one night at an inn in a Cathedral city. The local Rifle Volunteer Corps, which had been having a rifle-shooting competition at the butts, ended the day with a dinner at the same inn. My friend and I were courteously invited to join them at their after-dinner sing-song. As we entered the room a rotund little man in a tight red jacket was singing "The Soldiers of the Queen," with patriotic fervour, and the company took up the chorus and set the rafters ringing with:

"And when they ask us how it's done  
And why it is we've always won  
We point with pride to every one  
Of the soldiers of the Queen."

The strains of this fine specimen of braggadocio had scarcely died away when the Major of the Volunteer Corps read out the results of the rifle-shooting competition. Out of a possible 100 the first prizeman had scored 34. My friend and I managed to suppress our laughter at the anti-climax; but we reminded each other of the incident a few years later when the Boer War brought a succession of reverses upon our soldiers, and when seventy thousand farmers, who had no uniforms or brass buttons, but who could shoot, kept a British Army chasing them about on the veldt for three years.

The Boer War exposed the pitiable inefficiency of British generalship at that period, and the almost criminal stupidity of our War Office. When one day Mr. St. John Brodrick rose in the House of Commons, and read a war bulletin which began with the words, "Intelligence has reached the War Office," that irrepressible wit Jim Healy ejaculated "Hear! Hear!" and the Commons could scarce forbear to cheer his ironical interjection. The Boer War is only an ugly memory now, commemorated by a word which recalls a wild night when London went roaring mad over the relief of Mafeking. Whatever we, who lived through it, thought about the Boer War at the time, we have most of us, I think, come to see that "the trail of finance was over it all." During that war we taught the world the use of "concentration camps." It is a peculiarly painful thought that Mrs. Smuts, wife of Field-Marshal Smuts, suffered all the privations and ignominies of life in a British concentration camp and (I think I am correct in saying) that one of Field-Marshal and Mrs. Smuts's children died in one of those camps. If so the Field-Marshal is a magnanimous and all-forgiving man as well as one of the wisest and most loyal statesmen within the British Commonwealth.

The pulse of life beat slowly, perhaps sedately, in London in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The speeding up process had hardly begun. The telephone had scarcely come into common use. In not more than one office in ten, and in not more than one home in a hundred was a telephone installed. Nor was the electric light in general use. The typewriter was almost a novelty. The dictaphone was not dreamed of. Sometimes I seriously wonder whether by accelerating the pace of life we get more actual work done than in those leisurely days when we had time to stand and stare. And what do we do with the time we are supposed to save by our modern devices? When Dr. Cheng Li, a leader of the Christian Church in China visited Boston, Mass., he was taken by his host for a week-end visit to his farm. They made the journey by the subway. At one station Dr. Cheng was hurried out of the train, and across the platform where another train was waiting. "There," said his host, "by making that change we save four minutes." Dr. Cheng, a sage Oriental, looked serious for a moment, then smilingly asked "And what

shall we do with them?" Possibly his host was reminded of Kipling's "epitaph drear"—

"A fool lies here  
Who tried to hustle the East."

The typewriter, I concede, has been a boon and a blessing to man: but I seriously doubt whether all our up-to-date time and labour-saving gadgets in our offices and homes lead to the efficiency that we imagine they promote.

The internal combustion engine had not yet come—in the 'nineties—to "stand *homo sapiens* on his fat head" (as Mr. H. G. Wells had picturesquely put it). The first motor-car I saw was a weird contraption. A man carrying a red flag walked in front of it (as the law then prescribed). My first ride in a motor-car was a fiasco. The car stopped suddenly at the foot of a hill in Surrey, and had to be dragged to the nearest village by a farm horse, while a retinue of country urchins jeered us on our way. A cartoon of that period which I possess represents a motor-car being pulled along a miry road by two shire horses, while the car-owner's wife is saying, "Do you know, John, this is the first time I've really enjoyed riding in this thing since you got it!" Ballooning had a short vogue about 1890, and in that year I saw a man drop from a balloon and parachute to the ground safely. It was not until twenty years later that Orville and Wilbur Wright sent the first primitive heavier-than-air flying machine on its initial staggering flight of fifty yards at Kitty Hawk. The conquest of the air was hailed as an achievement that would annihilate distance, facilitate communications, make all the world one parish, and above everything, make wars to cease. Few people, to-day, I imagine would say that the aeroplane is an unmingled blessing. I had very grave doubts about the conquest of the air when, from my study window on a hill-top in Surrey, I saw London burning in 1940, while the Luftwaffe showered high explosive and incendiary shells on my beloved city. I had no doubts whatever when a few weeks later my own home was blasted by a 1,000-lb. bomb dropped from a German aeroplane, and I had to live for six months as an evacuee in a near-by town.

London was indifferently fed fifty years ago. A middle-class

nan had little choice of restaurants serving a decent midday meal at a reasonable price. The Cheshire Cheese in Fleet Street had a long standing reputation for its steak and kidney puddings, and at Simpson's one could always get a substantial meal of delicious roast beef or saddle of mutton (*ad lib*) which was good value for the money, provided one had the appetite commensurate with the cost. There were a few A.B.C.'s, no Lyons's, and no milk bars. Public houses served midday dinners to regular customers who sat on high stools at a bar counter. A few Italian restaurants in Soho had their own special *clientèle*. The intervening years have seen almost immeasurable improvements in London's catering. And perhaps the improvement in the provision of amusements ought to be acknowledged. When I came to London in 1890 "The Gondoliers" was just starting its long run at the Savoy—a new theatre, then, built expressly to stage Gilbert and Sullivan light operas. Gilbert and Sullivan had, however, just had a miserable squabble over a carpet, and dissolved their prolific partnership. John L. Toole was running his own theatre near Charing Cross, playing, I think, a piece called "Walker, London," the first play written by a young Scotsman named J. M. Barrie, who married one of the actresses in the cast. Henry Irving was staging Shakespeare at the Lyceum, with Ellen Terry at the crest of her career. It was Irving, I think, who broke through the traditional prejudice of Nonconformists against theatre-going. Perhaps it was fitting that he should have been the man to do this, since Irving came of a Nonconformist family—Brodribb, by name—who were closely associated with the King's Weigh House Chapel, near London Bridge, where a famous Congregational preacher, Dr. Thomas Binney (author of the familiar hymn, "Eternal Light! Eternal Light!") was the minister. Though Irving never actually joined the Church (he thought, he said in a letter recently published, that it was a grave step calling for much consideration) he greatly respected Dr. Binney. To see Shakespeare's plays acted by Henry Irving and Ellen Terry became a part of the ritual of Nonconformists visiting London, and the objection to play-acting, dating back to Puritan times, was waived as far as the Lyceum was concerned. Beerbohm Tree was staging spectacular drama at the Haymarket

and delighting his intimate friends with his caustic wit. "Excuse me," said Tree one day to one of his stage ladies at a rehearsal, "but the R in jaw is always muted." Dan Leno was the idol of the music halls and pantomime. It was Dan Leno who excused himself for drawing a bigger salary than the Prime Minister by pleading that he "did so much less harm." Just about this time he listened, for the first and only time, to a debate in the House of Commons, and archly suggested that "it would go better with a piano." Miss Marie Lloyd, *sui generis* in her combination of genius and vulgarity, was regarded as a bit of real Cockney life. George Grossmith, tired of Gilbert and Sullivan opera roles, and a salary at the Savoy rigidly fixed at £16 a week, had started in a new career as "an entertainer with a pianoforte." At German Reed's little hall in Regent Street, where Mr. Maskelyne baffled his audiences by his wizardry, a very fat man named Corney Grain entertained with satirical songs and brilliant pianoforte playing, more successfully than George Grossmith. Corney Grain, who weighed about eighteen stone, accompanied by an equally adipose friend, hailed a four-wheeled cab one day. As soon as the two bulky men had squeezed themselves inside, the bottom of the cab fell out. A newsboy, watching the scene, looked inside the cab, and commented, "No blooming wonder!"

Though no longer a world's wonder, and already wearing a shabby neglected aspect suggestive of a dilapidated greenhouse, the Crystal Palace managed to attract visitors by dog-shows, fireworks, performing fleas, and minor entertainments. A story used to be told of two Lancashire operatives visiting London, and going to the Crystal Palace, where they got separated in the crowd, and did not meet again until they got home. One had been listening, he said, to some first-rate brass band playing. The other had gone to see the performing fleas and, rubbing his elbow, ruefully observed, "And I'm rather thinking, Charlic, that I've accidentally cloped with the leading lady." But the Crystal Palace still held high rank as a home of good music. First-class concerts conducted by Mr. August Mann attracted music lovers to Sydenham from all over London, while the triennial Handel Festivals with an orchestra of five hundred and a choir of three thousand, with soloists like Madame Albani, Clara Samuels,

Edward Lloyd, and Santley, drew vast audiences from all over the country. The only time I ever heard Madame Patti was at the Crystal Palace.

Of good music there was a plentiful provision in the "nineties." In the opera season the two brothers Jean and Edward de Reszke starred at Covent Garden. Hans Richter popularized Wagner at St. James's Hall, and Bach was winning devotees among London music lovers through the good work of Mr. and Mrs. George Henschel and the Bach Choir. The stolid Joachim, always in the same greasy old dress suit, and, I sometimes thought, the same crumpled shirt front, was the premier violinist of the day, though Sarasate, a volatile Spaniard, vibrant with sheer virtuosity, had his own rapturous following. Paderewski, a dreary-eyed pole with a hayrick head of reddish hair, and a sad, unsmiling face, was the *matinée* idol of high school girls whom he allowed to drag him back to the pianoforte for encore after encore at his St. James's Hall recitals.

Negro minstrels were popular in London in the early 'nineties. The minstrels had a goodly following among Nonconformists. They sang haunting plantation melodies very beautifully on the one occasion when I heard them. I certainly enjoyed Moore and Burgess's minstrels far more than a pious melodrama of the early Christian era called "The Sign of the Cross," with Wilson Barrett in the leading rôle. The whole play offended all my religious instincts, but the most ghastly moment was when one of the characters—I think it was St. John in his Patmos captivity—came to the footlights and declaimed the Beatitudes, loudly cheered by the gallery. Think of it! "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (loud cheers). I shuddered, and made for the exit.

## CRICKET AND CRICKETERS

*Reporting Cricket—Sidney Pardon—A daughter of Karl Marx—Archie MacLaren's first County Match—The "Run-stealers"—J. T. Hearne's sensational début—Collaborating with W. G. Grace on his "Reminiscences"—Wilfred Rhodes emerges—"W.G." retires—Great wicket-keepers—William Attewell and Neville Cardus*

OUTDOOR sports did not, in the early 'nineties, attract the vast crowds that they do to-day: but there were always good "gates" at Lord's or the Oval for representative matches like Gentlemen *v.* Players, North *v.* South, Oxford *v.* Cambridge, and when one of the leading counties was playing Middlesex or Surrey. I am one of the dwindling company who remember when a line on a "Globe" or "Echo" placard, "Grace batting at Lord's" started a long file of hansom cabs, with the horses' bells jingling merrily, from the City and the West End—all going full speed towards Marylebone. At the Oval a great all-round cricketer, George Lohmann, was the idol of the Surrey crowd. In the summers of 1890 and 1891 reporting cricket matches was my main occupation, and, looking back, they were the happiest summers of my life. Reporting cricket came nearer to sheer fun than any work I have ever had to do. The open-air life, the easy, pleasant work, the congenial environment, and the *cameraderie* among the reporters in the press box made the days go by like a song.

On my first day in the press box at Lord's I made the acquaintance, which developed into a friendship, of a very remarkable man—Sidney Pardon, the Editor of "Wisden," and the most authoritative writer on cricket in his days. "Sidney" had a prodigious memory. He carried in his head all the statistics of cricket—averages, scores, records, results of matches, and county championship tables—ready for production at any given moment.

He was equally *au fait* with bloodstock. He was an accomplished musician, and a regular subscriber to the Opera Season at Covent Garden. And, strange to say, he took an interest in philosophy and theology. He was very short-sighted, and watched cricket



through field-glasses. The last time I saw him—many years after our first meeting—he was standing outside the “Christian World” office in Fleet Street trying to read the list of preachers and sermons on a small poster advertising “The Christian World Pulpit.” He pulled me up, and made me read out the names of the preachers—among them several leading Anglican and Free Churchmen. Pardon listened attentively—he was deeply interested—then turning his strained eyes on me he said, “All confused Theists, I suppose, like you and me, Porritt?” A newcomer to the press box at Lord’s took a seat near me one day, and rather embarrassed me by his fussy attentions. As we went down to lunch Sidney Pardon took my arm, and, speaking very seriously, said, “I want to warn you against that man: have nothing to do with him. He is an evil person.” The man was Dr. Edward Aveling, a brilliant man of science, the son of a Congregational minister, and a man who, if he had any moral sense, might have won high distinction. I kept out of his way as Sidney Pardon advised. The next time he came into the press box at Lord’s Dr. Aveling brought with him a fair buxom looking woman. This lady was Elinor Marx, daughter of Karl Marx, author of “Das Kapital.” Aveling and she were living together. Their association ended in tragedy. Aveling turned his attention to another lady, and announced his intention of marrying her. Elinor Marx was found dead in Aveling’s lodgings, and the coroner’s verdict was that she had committed suicide. But some people who knew Edward Aveling had their doubts. About his own death later there was also some mystery. He was a rogue in grain.

The seasons of 1890 and 1891 were “vintage years” in cricket history. Murdoch brought over (in 1890) an Australian team that included C. T. B. Turner and J. J. Ferris, two indefatigable bowlers that it was a joy to watch, as well as a long, lanky youth, Hugh Trumble, destined to be a very formidable bowler. In that same season I watched William Gunn and Arthur Shrewsbury set up a record of 398 for a partnership. It was an historic but not a thrilling performance. Gunn was a graceful and powerful batsman, but apt to be slow: Shrewsbury’s batsmanship was masterly, but he was always slow. On this occasion both men

were tedious. E. H. D. Sewell, who is a living encyclopaedia, confirms the story that Gunn and Shrewsbury used to fine each other half-a-crown if either hit the Sussex lob bowler, Humphreys, for more than two fours in an over. Neville Cardus tells a similar sort of story of two Yorkshire professionals who were batting together against an up-and-down bowler and by arrangement between themselves quietly ran up the score by taking a couple or so off each over. Suddenly one of the batsmen lashed out ferociously and made four fours off the bowler. His partner protested. "Tha's spoilt it all, George," he said, "by knocking him off." "It's all right, Jack," his fellow-batsman replied, "I 'eard the captain tell him that he was taking him off after that over."

The same season (1890) saw two amateurs, both of whom captained England in later years, make their *début* in County Cricket. F. S. Jackson, fresh from Cambridge, played for Yorkshire, while A. C. MacLaren, then Captain of Harrow, played in his first County match. I was present on the Hove ground on April 14, 1890, when "Archie" MacLaren, a schoolboy of eighteen, made his sensational 108 against Sussex on his first appearance for Lancashire. He and "Johnny" Briggs, as I remember well, treated the Sussex bowling very disrespectfully for two hours. MacLaren's was a dashing, faultless innings, and his century in his first match in first-class cricket was a feat unparalleled in County cricket history, and started him on a dazzling career, not only as a batsman but as an outstanding strategist in captaincy. In 1890 I saw A. N. Hornby and R. G. Barlow give a memorable display of run stealing. Spectators were left speechless by their audacities at "tip and run." Hornby was the most daring run-stealer of all time. Occasionally he ran Barlow out, but he always compensated the dour Lancashire professional with a sovereign. Francis Thompson's cricket poem on "Lord's" has always been a source of delight to me, especially the closing lines:

"And I look through my tears at a soundless-clapping  
host  
As the run-stealers flicker to and fro,  
To and fro,  
O, my Hornby and my Barlow long ago!"

In Lancashire A. N. Hornby was known as "Monkey" Hornby, and Francis Thompson, I have been told, originally wrote "O, my Monkey and my Barlow long ago." Happily he corrected that *bêtise*. Hornby, whose cricket career was nearing its close in 1890, is said to have discovered R. G. Barlow, when, stranded at a Yorkshire border railway junction with an hour to wait for his train. He was invited by the station-master to "come and have a bowl at our porter; he's been batting for six weeks and we can't get him out!" A stonewaller to go in No. 1 for Lancashire was just what Hornby was seeking, and it was thus that Barlow came to play in Lancashire County Cricket.

Another famous cricketer of test match calibre, John Thomas Hearne, was given a trial for the Middlesex eleven in May, 1890, in a match at Lord's against Kent. I saw him make his *début*. Just before play started, the match cards came out, giving "J. T. Hearne" as the eleventh man, and there was some discussion in the press box about this newcomer. Mr. Sidney Pardon, sitting in the front seat, called out to Alec Hearne, the Kent professional, as he passed under the press box, asking if this new Middlesex man, J. T. Hearne, was any relation. "No, no relation at all," Alec Hearne replied unhesitatingly. The Kent innings began, and J. T. Hearne was put on to bowl. And he was not taken off. He took six wickets for sixty-two runs. Clearly, here was a new bowler of merit. After the luncheon interval Alec Hearne again passed under the press box, "Edgar," said Sidney Pardon to his brother, "just ask Alec Hearne if this new youngster is any kinsman of his." Edgar Pardon put the question. "Yes," replied Alec Hearne in a jubilant voice, "he's a cousin of mine." As usual W. G. Grace, described by Francis Thompson as

"The long whiskered Doctor that laugheth rules to scorn  
While the bowler pitched against him bans the day that he was born."

headed the county batting average-table that season.

The second of my cricket reporting seasons (1891) was one of the wettest summers in my memory. It had rained all through April, and it was raining in May when cricket was due to begin at Lord's. One press box wag, on his first appearance that season, greeted his *confrères* with the remark, "The cricket, or rainy

season, has begun, and we must take to our mackintoshes." There were many blank days at Lord's that summer.

Two seasons of cricket reporting were really sufficient for me. I did not want to be a cricket reporter all my life, though I had enjoyed the experience. I wanted to be a serious journalist, concerning myself with politics, social questions, and literature. So I saw very little cricket (beyond a few matches at Fenner's, Cambridge) between 1891 and 1898, when once more I found myself in the cricket world—collaborating with W. G. Grace in writing his "W. G. Cricketing Reminiscences." Grace gave me his reminiscences *viva voce*, discursively and haphazard. My job was to give them shape, and write the book. I was, in fact, the "ghost." My remuneration was £100 for writing a hundred thousand words, compiling and bringing up to date over a hundred pages of cricket records, statistics, and curiosities. W. G.'s share was, at least, twenty times that sum as royalties, and the lion's share in the serial rights from day to day publication in "The Echo." I had no grievance over the disproportionate remuneration. It was Grace's name on the title page, not my writing, that sold the book in thousands. I asked Grace to give me one of his old bats, autographed as a souvenir of our association—which was a very happy one, for though W.G. had a gusty temper he was always amiable and considerate to me. He promised me a bat, but it never came. I hoped he would send me a copy of the book, with his signature in it, on publication day: but that did not come either. Possibly he did not care, in the circumstances, to send me a copy inscribed "With the author's best wishes." In this respect Grace differed from a lady who published a book for which one friend of mine supplied all the facts and arguments, while another friend wrote the chapters. On publication day both received copies of the book bearing the inscription, "With the author's kind regards." Literary "ghosts" have odd experiences just as "authors" who use their services have queer ways.

Just as W.G.'s "Reminiscences" were nearing completion I had to go to Nottingham, where the first Test match against Australia that year (1899) was being played—to extract some revised proofs from Grace. It was Wilfred Rhodes' first Test match and W. G. Grace's last. Grace was fifty, growingly burdened with adipose

tissue, slow in the field, and slower still in running between the wickets. His last Test match was rather a sad end to such a wonderful career. He failed with the bat in the first innings, and was obviously chagrined. When the Australians batted and the first two English bowlers had had an initial spell, Grace went on to bowl hoping, no doubt, to redeem with the ball his failure with the bat. But an audible groan went round the Trent Bridge ground. "What, Grace as England's first change bowler!" I heard a man in the pavilion say in a very audible voice. And Grace, though he employed all his wiles, had no success with the ball that day. Before the match ended he announced that he would never play in another Test match. One memory of that Test match at Nottingham comes to mind. In the evening when "W.G." and I were looking over proofs of his "Reminiscences," C. B. Fry came into the room to tell Grace that young Rhodes was so shy that he did not like to order the fieldsmen about to suit his bowling. "Tell him to come and see me, Charles," said Grace, "I'll tell him to put the fielders where he wants them to be, and if they don't go there they'll have me to deal with."

W. G. Grace was a cricketer by predestination, though he was a Doctor of Medicine by profession. His practice at Bristol was among poor people, to whose welfare he was genuinely devoted. He had given up practice and was living at Sydenham when I collaborated with him. I can hardly imagine that he had kept himself up to date in medical science. He certainly was not a student, or interested in any form of literature except "Wisden" (of which he had a complete file) and "Ruff's Guide to the Turf." The only medical book I ever saw in his home was an ancient volume on midwifery—though possibly he had disposed of his books on selling his practice. When he gave up cricket Grace took to golf. The last time I saw him was at Victoria station one morning, when, with his caddie bag slung over his shoulder, he lumbered his way through the crowd at the ticket barrier, and, seeing me, shouted a friendly greeting in that high squeaky voice which sounded so odd emerging from a man of his gigantic stature and girth. A year or two later the grim news came that W.G. had died in a Zeppelin raid during the first Great War. He was a very sick man at the time, confined to his bed, and the

sound of bombs exploding around his home was too much for his enfeebled heart. W. G. Grace was, I have always felt, a man cast in a mould distinctive to himself. Cricket was his life. I wish he had been given a knighthood. He would have enjoyed the honour, and it would certainly not have been undeserved.

As a boy in Lancashire I once saw Richard Pilling keeping wicket at Old Trafford. I have never forgotten it. I was far too young to appreciate his wizardry behind the stumps, but to me he seemed a miracle as he took Jack Crossland's lightning "throws." Since that day, more than half a century ago, wicket-keepers have had an uncanny fascination for me—more even than bowlers or batsmen. Once I saw Alfred Lyttelton don the gloves at Lord's, and that is another treasured memory. Mordecai Sherwin, who "kept" for Nottingham and England in his day—a big burly man with hands (which he once showed me) gnarled like a cankered apple tree—stands out in my memory. So, too, does Duckworth, the noisiest of all the great wicket-keepers as well as one of the most efficient. I am not overlooking Ames and Strudwick when I place Gregor McGregor first among my pet wicket-keepers. But Blackham and Oldfield compel my deepest admiration. Blackham's beard almost as much as his amazing prowess singled him out for notice. But the singular thing about Oldfield's wicket-keeping was that it was so inconspicuous; his infallibility behind the stumps almost evaded attention. He was the invisible man, and silent too. Where Duckworth would howl "How's that?" Oldfield would lift up an appealing finger to the umpire, and out the batsman went, for Oldfield rarely appealed unless he was sure of a verdict.

Cricket has not inspired much real literature, though many books have been written about it. But stories about cricket and cricketers abound. One, which stands in a category by itself, was told me by Dr. James Moffatt. Lewis Carroll (C. L. Dodgson) was in Christ Church senior common room one night when the conversation turned on cricket. He was silent, and someone asked him if he took no interest in cricket. "I played cricket only once," he replied, "and then I only bowled one ball, but they told me that if it had gone far enough it would have been a wide."

Cricket may not be quite the school of manners, morals, and

honour that it is often claimed to be, but within my memory it has had some men—I think at once of the Studd brothers, Sir K. J. Key, Mr. A. J. Webbe and Lord Hawke, to name only a few—whose moral stature and high-mindedness have lent lustre to the game, and deeply influenced the characters of men who played with them. One professional for whom I had a profound respect—though my personal acquaintance with him was only very slight—was William Attewell, the Notts, M.C.C., and England bowler. W. G. Grace said that Attewell was a bowler who never gave his captain any trouble. He would bowl for hours without relief, and he seemed to make bowling effortless. He was one of nature's gentlemen, and won respect from everyone. When he retired from first class cricket he went to Shrewsbury School to coach the boys. His assistant was a young man named Neville Cardus—now world famous as a writer on cricket—and often at the end of a hard afternoon's bowling in the nets, Attewell (Neville Cardus has told me) would sit in the shade of the trees and say, "Neville, this has been another wasted day. We haven't produced owt." His conscience pricked him about playing to live or living to play. He was a pious man, a Methodist, I think, and his religious sense of the dignity of man made him wonder whether to do nothing but play cricket was making a proper use of the gift of life.

Mr. Neville Cardus became a writer on cricket by what one might almost call an accident. He had joined the staff of "The Manchester Guardian" as a junior general reporter whose main concern was with events in the life of the city. One day, in the absence of the cricket reporter, he was sent to Old Trafford to report a Lancashire cricket match. There he was on his native heath—a master of every theoretical phase of the game. In those days "The Manchester Guardian" scarcely took cricket seriously, and all that Neville Cardus was expected to do was to hand in a brief summary of the day's play, along with the scores. Instead, he wrote a picturesque descriptive report (with a quotation from Dickens, I have no doubt, and an allusion, almost certainly, to the rhythm of the game). The sub-editor, who knew "good copy" when he saw it, was nonplussed. He had budgeted for a quarter of a column: Neville Cardus had handed in a full column.

The "copy" was sent to the "corridor" where editorial decisions are made, and it came back with instructions that it should be published intact and in large type. Neville Cardus had "arrived," and soon "The Manchester Guardian" sketches and reports signed "Cricketer" were recognized as something new and distinctive in cricket reporting. A year or two before the war, Neville Cardus and his friend Mr. H. Boardman ("The Manchester Guardian's" special Parliamentary correspondent) spent a winter Saturday in a long walk in Sussex. Mr. Boardman wanted to see that day's "Manchester Guardian," and they called at a railway station to see if a copy was to be got at the book-stall. "No, sir," said the book-stall clerk, "we only stock 'The Manchester Guardian' in the cricket season." Neville Cardus's love of cricket is a passion—almost an obsession. But with him cricket is more than a game; it is an institution, like the British Constitution. He has told me that the two most miserable moments in his life were, first, when he saw on a newspaper placard, "Death of Rhodes," and the words obscured the sunlight until, getting closer, he saw "Cecil" above the "Rhodes"—then he breathed freely again. And, second, one morning when there had been a critical Test match in Australia (a game which would decide the fate of the "Ashes") and he bought a "special" edition containing the result of the match, and stood, he told me, trembling with excitement, holding the paper in his hands but not daring to open it and look at the stop press news column!

In recent years Neville Cardus has become as much absorbed in music as he is in cricket. On the death of Mr. Sam Langford he was appointed musical critic of "The Manchester Guardian." In that capacity he has won a second distinction. Until the War upset both his worlds he saw the English cricket season draw to its close and then dashed off to Salzburg for the musical festival. Now peace has come it may be that Neville Cardus will have to make a grave decision—whether he shall combine cricket reporting with musical criticism, or make a choice between his two loves. I almost feel that music will get the preference. It would inflict a sore loss on cricket enthusiasts to be robbed of the joy of reading the comments of perhaps the finest writer on cricket that the great game has ever inspired.



## CHAPTER V

### A HALCYON YEAR

*Eight months in Cambridge—J. K. Stephen—The Cambridge Light Poets—Calverley and the sign—Oscar Browning—A General Election in 1892—Mr. George Newnes as politician—Mr. R. C. Lehmann—The eccentricities of Dr. J. J. Thomson—A Governor of Cheshunt College—Bernard Manning—The last prisoner in the Spinning House*

THE priceless boon of a University education was denied me, and my consequent sense of deprivation has been accentuated by my association with both Oxford and Cambridge. Had I been given the chance of a University education and the choice of my University I think I should have been drawn to Cambridge by its more liberal traditions. The eternal question which is the more beautiful seat of learning may, so far as I am concerned, be eternally adjourned. Both are incomparable, each in its own way. Both Oxford and Cambridge have undergone great structural changes within my memory, but the changes are less conspicuous—or less obtrusive—at Cambridge than at Oxford, which, it has been said, has now become merely the Quartier Latin of Cowley.

My memories of the eight months I lived in Cambridge in 1892 are still fragrant. When my two years' apprenticeship on the London editorial staff of "The Manchester Examiner" drew near to the close I became very conscious that in starting out in journalism with work around the Houses of Parliament, I had really begun at the wrong end. I had become quite familiar with Parliamentary procedure, and the operations of Government departments at Whitehall, but I had not seen local government in operation. Police Courts, Coroners' Inquests, Town Council and Poor Law Guardians' meetings, had been entirely off my beat. Moreover I had not had any touch with the printing and commercial side of a newspaper. I had never read a "galley proof," and was blissfully ignorant of the process of "making up" a newspaper. I knew that experience of these aspects of journalism was essential. I had put the cart before the horse when I began my journalism, by dealing with the great affairs of state before I had learned anything about

the small things—the annals of the parish—which count for so much in the life of the community. This led me to decide to seek some experience on a local newspaper outside London. An advertisement for the chief reporter for an evening paper about to be issued in connection with “The Cambridge Independent Press” caught my eye one morning, and instead of making an application by post I took the train to Cambridge, saw the proprietor of the paper, and was engaged on the spot. The new evening paper, I was given to understand, was being started to advance the cause of two Liberal candidates (Mr. George Newnes and Mr. R. C. Lehmann) in the town and county constituencies of Cambridge in the General Election, which, it was expected, would take place in the early autumn. When the election was over the evening paper ceased publication: and that suited me very well. I had enlarged my experience, and I had enjoyed eight delightful months in Cambridge—months made all the more joyous since three former schoolmates who were, at the time, undergraduates at St. John’s, Caius, and Queens’ gave me opportunities for entering, in some slight measure, into their social life.

Cambridge in 1892 had an air of somnolence which has vanished now. It would have been almost safe to lie down and go to sleep for half an hour in the King’s Parade. What J. K. Stephen called the “Tardy Tram” ran half-hourly, and cabs were rarities. It was “always afternoon,” and that summer was an exceptionally sunny one. The “Backs” never seem to look so bewitchingly lovely now as they did in May, June, and July 1892. Dr. Butler was the Master of Trinity then, and Cambridge was still gossiping about his romantic marriage to the youthful Miss Ramsay who had just headed the lists in the Classical Tripos. I think it was “The Granta” that published a skittish article about an alleged conversation overheard at a garden party between Dr. Butler and his fiancée. “What would popsy-wopsy do if ootsy-wootsy were to die?” asked the lady. “Oh, popsy-wopsy would die too,” replied the learned swain. Newnham had not ceased preening its feathers over Miss Phillipa Garrett Fawcett’s triumph in getting placed above the Senior Wrangler in the Mathematical Tripos. The Cambridge light poets were still being quoted, though one heard less of C. S. Calverley than of J. K. Stephen, who had gone

down more recently. I heard all about the eccentricities of J. K. S. especially of his early morning walks in carpet slippers, dressing gown, and sports cap, smoking a pipe "fashioned like the head of the Grand Old Man," through Fitzwilliam Street into Downing College gardens. I am afraid that J. K. S. is almost forgotten now save for his four lines praying for the time:—

"When there stands a muzzled stripling,  
Mute, beside a muzzled bore:  
When the Rudyards cease from Kipling  
And the Haggards Ride no more."

Mr. Bernard Darwin occasionally quotes J. K. S. in his delightful fourth leaders in "The Times." Another Cambridge light poet in whose deft verses the undergraduates were revelling was Arthur Clement Hilton, who had died fifteen years before. He, too, is forgotten now, I think, though his parody of Bret Harte, "The Heathen Passec" (the story of Tom Crib sitting for the "little-go") deserves to be remembered. It has the lines:

"And we found in his palms, which were hollow,  
What are frequent in palms—that is, dates."

One story of Calverley comes back to mind. When an undergraduate at Christ's College, C. S. C. took long walks in Cambridgeshire, far beyond the customary afternoon "grinds" of pedestrian undergraduates. Once he stopped at a country inn called "The Man with a Bag of Mischief." Over its entrance hung a sign representing a man staggering under the weight of a sack, a slit in which disclosed a woman, a wine goblet, a pack of cards, and a dice box. The sign caught Calverley's fancy, and no doubt thinking it would look well hanging on the wall of his room in college, he took it down and marched away with it. The landlord raised a hue and cry, and followed Calverley with nearly all the villagers clamouring for the picture. As C. S. C. strode on towards Cambridge the crowd grew larger and larger, until, by the time he reached Christ's College it numbered two or three hundred, all still excitedly clamouring for the sign. As Calverley turned under Christ's gateway, he ran into the arms of the Master, Dr. Peile, who asked sternly, "Are you responsible, Mr. Calverley, for all this rabble gathering outside the College?"

"No sir," replied the unabashed Calverley, "a wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it." Oscar Browning was still teaching history at King's in 1892—a pompous, fussy, rotund little man about whom countless stories were told in Cambridge. He had asked the late Master of Trinity (Dr. Thompson, a man with a sour wit and a caustic tongue) what he should do with 20,000 books, and only a Fellow's rooms to house them in. "Begin reading some of them," snapped Dr. Thompson, who—not Jowett of Balliol—was the author of the saying, "We are none of us infallible, not even the youngest of us." It was Thompson, also, who, when he heard Liddell lecture, remarked, "What a clever man Scott must be!" Oscar Browning was presented, somewhere, to Kaiser Wilhelm II, and said afterwards that "he was quite the nicest emperor I have ever met." At a garden party at Trinity given by Dr. Thompson in honour of Tennyson, Oscar Browning sidled up to the Poet Laureate and introduced himself, "I'm Browning," he said. "I'm damned if you are," retorted Tennyson, and walked away.

The General Election campaign kept me very busily employed, and I had often to sit up writing until the early hours of the morning, with the song of the nightingales in Downing Gardens as an obligato to my labours. I found electioneering good fun in that first experience of it. Mr. George Newnes, who was fighting the county constituency, had a widely scattered area to cover, and nearly every night he went out in a horse-drawn carriage to address village meetings. I often accompanied him, and sometimes, when an impromptu meeting was held in the open air with the carriage serving as the platform, I was called upon to be chairman and introduce the candidate with a few laudatory remarks. Mr. Newnes was no orator: he was scarcely an effective speaker, and occasionally he was almost incoherent. But to the Cambridgeshire villagers he was a "jolly good fellow" who gave generously to local causes—sporting, charitable, and religious. It is not as a politician, nor as a member of Parliament, but as a pioneer in cheap, popular journalism that Mr. George Newnes merits a niche in the temple of fame. When he was a clerk in a Manchester city office he read aloud one night a para-

graph in the local evening paper, and said to his wife, "Now, that's a tit-bit, isn't it?" The bright idea of a paper devoted to such tit-bits developed in his mind and, risking all the money he had, he launched "Tit-Bits," and was soon on the way to a fortune. Later he established "The Strand Magazine," which was an immediate success. When a Conservative syndicate bought the Liberal "Pall Mall Gazette" (whose editorial staff, led by Mr. E. T. Cook, refused to be transferred to the new proprietorship along with the office furniture) Mr. Newnes financed "The Westminster Gazette," and gave London an evening paper which later, under the editorship of Mr. J. A. Spender, was read by men of all parties, and exercised a political influence never equalled by an evening newspaper before or since. The paper lost money: but Mr. Newnes was rewarded with a well-earned baronetcy. He financed W. T. Stead's "Review of Reviews" on its first publication, but Stead and Newnes proved an impossible mixture, and their partnership soon ended. Mr. George Newnes, as I came to know him in that General Election campaign in 1892, was full of the milk of human kindness, and I never recall my short association with him without pleasure and satisfaction.

Mr. R. C. Lehmann, who stood for the borough of Cambridge, was a man cast in a very different mould. He did not win, but he fought gamely, like the gentleman he was, and lost like a sportsman. Mr. Lehmann cast a spell over me. He had something of the fascination of Sir Edward Grey or Alfred Lyttelton. He was wealthy, but had not a suggestion of ostentation. Though he never got his blue as a Cambridge oarsman, he more than once coached the Oxford eight for the boat race. He owned the "Granta," and later he edited (and partly owned) "The Daily News," and he had a seat as a staff contributor at the "Punch" dinner table. At last Mr. Lehmann did win a seat in the House of Commons; then he was stricken by a lingering brain disease and passed from the sight of man, leaving hosts of friends baffled over the inscrutable ways of Providence.

Cambridge in 1892 was rich in personalities. A. H. Housman was tutoring men in Latin: but he was an "invisible man" of whom no one knew anything. He had yet to publish "A Shropshire Lad," and to make that immortal speech at a Trinity College

dinner when he said that "this old College in this ancient University has seen many strange sights: it has seen Wordsworth drunk and Porson sober, and here am I, a better scholar than Wordsworth, and a better poet than Porson, betwixt and between." One intriguing personality, about whom many stories were in circulation—Dr. J. J. Thomson—was beginning to make himself famous. He was known to be at work in the Cavendish Laboratory developing Clerk Maxwell's discoveries, but as Madame Curie had not then found radium in pitchblende and Röntgen had not discovered X-rays, Dr. Thomson's greatest achievements had still to come. Already, however, he was by way of becoming a legend. His delirious excitement at Rugby football matches was a cause of much amusement. It was said that he would stop in the middle of a laboratory experiment to be in time for the "kick-off" at the football ground. An article in "The Cambridge Review" about Dr. Thomson, which I read during my first few days in Cambridge, awakened my interest in him. It was said of him that if he had never watched the smoke from his tobacco pipe vibrating he would probably never have been a scholar of Trinity. Some of the stories of Dr. Thomson circulating in Cambridge in 1892—no doubt *ben trovato*—concerned his Lancashire accent and his absent-mindedness. I saw him frequently at University functions, especially funerals—a short man with bright eyes gleaming through his spectacles below a high domed forehead. One day I saw him at Fenner's watching a cricket match, sitting huddled up in a shabby overcoat—for it was a cold day and the Cambridge east wind (so well described as "a lazy wind," because it will not go round you, but goes through you) was blowing across the cricket ground. Years afterwards I heard Dr. Thomson address the schoolboys at the Leys, and give one of the best and most wholesome talks to boys that I have ever heard. It was full of homely sense and wise injunctions. Dr. Thomson accumulated Doctorates from twenty-three Universities ranging from Athens to Reading, as well as the Order of Merit, and the Mastership of Trinity. My knowledge of physics is rudimentary, and higher mathematics are a mystery to me, but I can understand and enjoy a simple little story Dr. Thomson told Sir Oliver Lodge as a postscript to an abstruse scientific letter. This is the story—a

mother discovered her small son telling a lie. Mother: "Tommy, did you ever hear of Ananias and Sapphira?" Tommy: "Hear of them, Ma? I knew them both." Mother: "O Tommy! Do you know where they went for telling stories?" Tommy: "Yes, Ma. I saw them go."

Sir Joseph would, I am sure, have loved a similar story, told me by the late Frederick Peaker, once President of the Institute of Journalists and a rare raconteur. A small boy who had picked up some bad words was heard using one by his mother. She was shocked, and having admonished him said she would give him sixpence if he would promise never to say that word again. The small boy agreed, and was given the sixpence. "Thank you, Mother," he said, "but I think I ought to tell you that I know a word that's worth half a crown." A Manchester City Councillor who was at school with Sir J. J. Thomson, and who evidently prided himself on his local reputation, was reported by "The Manchester Guardian" as having said, "When I was at school there was a clever boy, little Joey Thomson, who took all the prizes. But what good has all his book learning done him? Who ever hears of little Joey Thomson now?" Such is fame!

I renewed my close association with Cambridge twenty-five years later, when to my great joy I was elected a Governor of Cheshunt College (a theological College with a long history dating back to the Evangelical Revival, when Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, founded a Calvinistic College at Trevecca in Wales). Cheshunt now boasts College buildings worthy of Cambridge, and until recently had as its President the Rev. Dr. J. S. Whale—now the Headmaster of Mill Hill School—a thinker and preacher whose influence on English religious life has been deep and widespread. Mention of Cheshunt College suggests a reference to a very remarkable man who was a fellow governor of the College—the late Bernard Lord Manning. The son of a Congregational minister, and himself an unswerving dissenter, Bernard Manning by sheer force and charm of character won for himself a peculiar niche in Jesus College and, indeed, in the University. He spent all his life at Jesus, from coming up as an undergraduate—then as Fellow, Bursar, and Senior Tutor. He was also a University Lecturer in history. His own choice would have been

to be a Congregational minister—and to the end he never abandoned hope that he would be—but ill health dogged him and forbade that aspiration. But physical disabilities did not prevent him radiating a remarkable religious influence through his writings and speeches in Cambridge, and even in wider spheres. He described himself as a High Church Congregationalist, but he was essentially a Catholic Christian. He was a regular worshipper at Emmanuel Congregational Church on Sunday mornings, but he rarely missed the services in the College Chapel at Jesus. He saw something in the Roman Catholic simplicity of faith and piety that awakened a response in his sensitive soul, and he spoke of the Mediaeval Church as “the mother of us all.” When he died memorial services were held for him in Jesus College Chapel, and in Emmanuel Congregational Church, and requiems were sung in Anglo-Catholic and Roman Catholic Churches. With all his rigid Puritanism—which led him once to say that “niceness” is not the main object of the Christian religion—he exuded a winsomeness that drew men to him, especially young men. He was utterly sincere, and there was such sweetness and light in his nature that he was irresistibly charming. He could be stern, and he was always firm. Often in his writing he was witty; occasionally with an underlying malice in the wit. His reference to “Lord Passfield, better known perhaps as Mrs. Sidney Webb,” was an example of the biting humour always at hand, but very seldom allowed to get out of hand. He was, as he avowed, a traditionalist, *sans phrase*, who would yield nothing to the modernist movements in theology. His sacramental views were unyieldingly conservative. Once when Bernard Manning had read a brilliant paper at a Congregational Theological Conference at Cambridge—a paper in which he virtually denied access to the Lord’s Table to any holder of Modernist views on the Person of Christ—(“I will not sit down at the Lord’s Table with such,” he said) I risked an annihilating rejoinder from him by questioning whether it might not further the cause of Christian unity, and charity, if the Communion service were suspended for twenty years. I raised the question whether there might not be some force in the contention that the Lord’s supper was not instituted by Jesus as a perpetual rite for his followers, but only



as a substitute for the Passover when his immediate disciples gathered for the Jewish festival. I expected an avalanche, but another speaker intervened and talked out the session. So Mr. Manning's reply was crowded out and I escaped castigation. I was sorry, because Bernard Manning was the kind of man whose criticisms leave no wounds. He would have thrashed me more in sorrow than in anger, and we should have probably gone to lunch together and he would have been as friendly and charming as ever. He belonged to that very select company of great souls that it is a benediction to have known and loved, for it was impossible to know Bernard Manning without loving him. Along with his saintliness Bernard Manning was very human. He knew all the music hall songs. He never missed an Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race. He was "Bernard" to the Jesus College undergraduates. He wrote limericks, he loved a story, he was a splendid conversationalist, and, what very few men are, a good listener.

When the British Association held its Annual Meeting at Cambridge one year the Rev. H. C. Carter (Bernard Manning's minister) arranged for a special British Association Sunday morning service at Emmanuel Congregational Church. It was to be conducted entirely by laymen. Bernard Manning was to be the preacher. To my astonishment Mr. Carter wrote asking me if I would conduct the devotional service. I have always been rather ashamed that I shrank from the duty and begged to be excused—though it is a difficult thing to refuse a request from Mr. Carter, whose wishes count as commands to his friends. If I had been given only one hour's notice—just time to collect my thoughts—I might have acceded to Mr. Carter's invitation, but with a month's notice I knew that my mind would be working incessantly on the service, which would have lost all spontaneity, and become stilted and unreal. I should have loved to confer with Bernard Manning about the selection of the hymns. He gloried in the hymns of Charles Wesley and Isaac Watts—giving Wesley first place—and I fancy that we should have agreed that three of the hymns to be sung that morning should be "O for a thousand tongues to sing," "Our God, our Help in ages past," and "There is a land of pure delight," for I am certain that those

historic hymns would have harmonized with Bernard Manning's sermon.

While I was living in Cambridge a long standing feud between Town and Gown was settled by a legal judgment. For centuries there had been in Cambridge what was virtually a University prison, known as the Spinning House, in which women suspected by the Proctors and their "bulldogs" of loitering for immoral purposes could be incarcerated overnight and tried next morning by the University authorities—and kept in custody if found guilty. This ancient right of Gown over Town had been for many years a grievance which many townsmen deeply resented. It was felt that it was an anachronism, and even of doubtful legality. While I was in Cambridge a woman named Jane Elsdon, known to be of easy virtue, was arrested by the Proctor; but she broke out of the Spinning House and was not re-arrested. A little while later a younger woman named Daisy Hopkins was cast into the Spinning House, and this gave the townsmen a better case for action for unlawful imprisonment. The trial took place before Mr. Justice Mathew at Ipswich Assizes, and I reported the case for my evening paper. My impression was that the University authorities recognized that the day of Spinning House jurisdiction was past. At all events it seemed to me that counsel for the University made no very strenuous effort to win the case. The result was a verdict against the University authorities. This gave great satisfaction to the townspeople, and, in time, relieved an unfortunate tension between Town and Gown. No subsequent use was made of the Spinning House, though the Proctors and their "bulldogs" (two hefty college servants) still go on their "prowls."

## THINGS BEST REMEMBERED

*Good Companions—Queen Victoria's Last Days—Mr. Gladstone's death—A story of M. Clemenceau—A Glimpse of Parnell, Dr. Martineau, James Chalmers, Dr. Stopford Brooke, Spofforth, Alfred Lyttelton, George Bonnor, Gilbert Jessop, Pilling, C. T. Studd*

MR. DESMOND MCCARTHY has said that for the best of good company he would choose professors and tired old journalists. I have mingled a good deal with professors and found them delightful people, and my life has been much spent with journalists. I agree with the choice; but I would add a third type of good companion—parsons, both Nonconformist ministers and Anglican clergymen, who are not so engrossed with the routine work of an urban parish that they have no time or inclination to know and understand their fellow-men, and to belong to the age in which they live. Somebody has said that journalists get stall seats for all the great shows of life; but Mr. Sidney Dark has pointed out that the journalist watches the big shows from the wings of the stage, and sees the tawdriness of the scenery and the grease paint on the faces of the actors. A man in Fleet Street soon sheds his illusions—or has them shattered for him—but I have never found journalists, as a class, more cynical than lawyers, doctors, and other professional men whose work brings the seamy side of life before their eyes. And I have known journalists some people would have thought cynical, do very chivalrous deeds, unostentatiously, and with no eye for any reward.

During my half century of work as a journalist I have lived under five monarchs—Queen Victoria, Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII, and George VI—have seen them all, sometimes at very close quarters, and have heard four of them speak. In my time there have been thirteen Prime Ministers, and I have seen and heard all of them except Disraeli, though I recall seeing “Death of Lord Beaconsfield” on a newspaper placard when I was a boy. In the same period there have been six Speakers of

the House of Commons, and I have seen them all in the chair, and watched each make his stately processional entry through the Central Lobby into the House. Queen Victoria just survived the "nineties." Between her two Jubilees she had cast off her rôle of the inconsolable "Widow at Windsor," and made a few fitful, almost furtive, appearances in public. I saw her three or four times—once I had a very long close view of her when she drove slowly through Hyde Park. She was queenly in her ways, but she did not look queenly. She seemed very shrunken, and her features had a heavy Teutonic cast. In those times the "Old Queen" was still an enigma to her people. Something about her commanded awe rather than affection. An austere divinity hedged the throne as long as she sat upon it. Quaint stories floated in the air about her foibles. One concerned her habit of having one of her maids of honour read passages of the Old Testament aloud to her in the evenings—readings which always led the ageing queen to weep at memories of Albert, and all her relatives that had gone to "where beyond these voices there is peace." Greatly daring, one maid of honour gently expostulated with the Queen, suggesting that instead of making her feel morbid the Old Testament stories should make her think of the joy she would have in meeting in heaven the great figures of the Bible—Moses, Abraham, Jacob, Solomon, David. "No, no," interjected Queen Victoria, "I will *not* meet David." I recall vividly the day of Queen Victoria's death. The event stirred the English people to their very depths. Queen Victoria dead! It was altogether incredible.

Mr. Gladstone was still the dominant figure of the first half of the last decade of the nineteenth century, and the day of his death also ended an epoch. He had been so long on the Parliamentary scene that he seemed to have acquired an immortality of his own. The greatness of his character came home to some people, even to his political opponents, when he passed away. His last weeks were harrowed by appalling pain—he suffered agonies from cancer in the face. John Morley said that when the end was approaching, Mr. Gladstone's cries when the paroxysms of pain racked him could be heard all over Hawarden Castle, but immediately the pain passed off the Grand Old Man was

singing, at the top of his voice, his favourite hymn—Newman's "Praise to the Holiest in the height, and in the depth be praise." Mr. Lloyd George, who sat in the House of Commons for five years along with Mr. Gladstone, always spoke of him with mingled admiration and awe. He told me one day at Churt, when we were talking about Gladstone, that when, just after the first Great War, M. Clemenceau was taking part in a conference at Downing Street, the deliberations were suspended while some documents were being copied. Mr. Lloyd George suggested to M. Clemenceau that as the sun was shining they might go out into the garden for a little stroll. There they came upon Mr. Bonar Law, who had slipped out to have a pipe. He joined Mr. Lloyd George and M. Clemenceau, who walked between the two Englishmen. Quite suddenly M. Clemenceau asked Mr. Lloyd George, "Was Mr. Gladstone a really great man?" Mr. Lloyd George replied, "He was the greatest man I have ever seen or heard. He was a *very* great man." Mr. Bonar Law snapped out, "And a very great humbug." M. Clemenceau chuckled, put a hand on the shoulder of each of his companions and retorted, "Well, perhaps there never was a very great man who was not also a very great humbug." It was characteristic of the cynical old "Tiger," who once bitterly declared, "My mother forsook me, my wife betrayed me, and my children disappointed me: but thank God, I've got my teeth left."

Something in my make-up has always left me indifferent to state ceremonials, and I did not see, though I had the opportunity, Queen Victoria's Jubilee processions, or any of the three coronations. Nor have I ever been in the House of Lords when the King has opened Parliament. But I shall never forget being in the Albert Hall when after the Armistice in 1918 the King and Queen, for the first time in history, worshipped with their Free Church subjects at a memorable thanksgiving service. I have never eaten turtle soup at a Lord Mayor's Banquet, though I have lunched in the Mansion House and dined in the Guildhall. It thrills me to remember that I was in the gallery of the House of Commons when the only two speeches which have changed votes in my lifetime were made—the first by Sir Henry Fowler, which saved a Government, and the second by Mr. Rosslyn

Mitchell, which killed a bill. I saw Parnell, pale-faced, with bloodshot eyes, going to Committee Room No. 15 when the Parnellites and the anti-Parnellites (the "split peas," as they were dubbed) were disputing hotly "whether Parnell should go" after the Divorce Court disclosures.

Great events often lose significance when watched at close quarters, and journalists who live in what George Meredith called the "hissing furnace of events" rarely feel the thrill of august occasions. I have forgotten entirely many such scenes; but some others, relatively unimportant, have stamped themselves on my memory. I once saw Dr. James Martineau conducting a wedding service, and heard him give a short but unforgettable address to the ministerial bridegroom and his bride. I once heard Dr. Stopford Brooke preach, as one inspired, in Bedford Chapel. I saw James Chalmers of New Guinea—the last missionary to be killed and eaten by cannibals. And, if the descent is not too precipitous, I saw F. R. Spofforth, the "Demon Bowler," bowl at Lord's. I saw Alfred Lyttelton keep wicket; I watched George Bonnor, the handsome Australian giant and lady-killer (who once threw a cricket ball 110 yards at first bounce) fielding in the long-fields at Lord's. I saw Gilbert Jessop break the heart of Tom Richardson by banging his bowling, ball after ball, to the Oval boundaries. To have seen Pilling wicket-keeping at Old Trafford, and to have watched Black calmly drop that incredible goal from the half-way line at Twickenham, are memories that quicken my heart beats. An afternoon spent with C. T. Studd, when his cricketing days were far behind him, and he had given himself, body, soul, and spirit, to lonely missionary work in China (he told me "I have had one long honeymoon with Christ in the mission field") remains fresh in my memory. I like to cherish, too, the recollections that I heard Mark Twain speak, that I spent half a day with Booker Washington, and that I saw President Woodrow Wilson drive through Fleet Street to be banqueted at the Guildhall. I think my cup would have been full if I had seen or met Gandhi, the Indian spiritual genius (though his political vagaries puzzle me), Toyohiko Kagawa (the intrepid Japanese Christian leader, whose trachoma, contracted when he shared

his bed with a tramp, excluded him from England), D. L. Moody (that strange American evangelist who touched to finer issues the lives of so many Englishmen), Henry Ward Beecher (a mighty preacher and a gladiator for human freedom), Bishop Phillips Brooks (a spiritual seer and saint of undying fame), and Albert Schweitzer (the Alsatian theologian, musician, and philosopher who—with all Europe at his feet—gave up everything to become a medical missionary in the swamps of Equatorial Africa). These are men I would have gone far to see or hear: but the opportunities were denied me—to my everlasting regret.

## A BACKWATER OF JOURNALISM

*"The Christian World" and its creator, James Clarke—Robertson Nicoll—  
The decline of Religious Journalism—Passive Resistance and its con-  
sequences—Suffragettes—The rise of interdenominationalism*

A QUITE accidental meeting with Dr. Burford Hooke, followed by a sequence of coincidences, took me out of the main stream of journalism into one of its backwaters—religious journalism, in which I found my life work, and in which too I found that my inbred interest in politics, literature, and art had ample outlets. If I have missed financial rewards I can at least say that I had full compensation in the opportunities religious journalism afforded me for travel, for enriching friendships, for close association with political leaders, journalists, ministers, authors, artists, and men of affairs, at home and abroad. There is nothing I would wish to change in my life work if I were beginning it all over again. "A good Providence," said Leonardo da Vinci, "selletth all good things unto us at the price of labour." That truth is confirmed by all my experience. In work I have found happiness—a sufficient reward for me. "The Christian World," whose editorial staff I joined in 1899—after an uneventful period when I edited "The Independent and Nonconformist"—had just passed its zenith. The paper, as the mouthpiece of Nonconformity, was the creation of James Clarke, a very remarkable journalist, steeped in liberalism—political and theological—and with an eagle eye for news. When the paper tax was repealed he had promptly brought the price of "The Christian World" down to a penny, reaping an instant reward for his enterprise and foresight. He established a record in religious journalism by his use of the telegraph and the cable. When the rotary printing press was invented he immediately installed one to print "The Christian World," and the high speed of printing enabled him to keep the paper open for late news on press night, and steal a march on his rivals. James Clarke had introduced his three sons and his son-in-law into the business, but none of them had his



remarkable journalistic flair. The editorial gift seems to be rarely transmitted from father to son. James Clarke's sons were splendidly loyal to their father's traditions. But times change and traditions lose virtue. The three sons of James Clarke were slow to appreciate that one fact, which had a very important bearing on "The Christian World." A new and larger daily newspaper reading public was coming into existence, and a weekly religious newspaper needed no longer to devote the space and attention to secular news which had been customary when most middle-class people read only one national weekly paper. Delay in adjusting editorial policy to this new situation prejudicially affected "The Christian World." The institution of Labour Exchanges struck a blow at the paper's revenue from small "wanted" advertisements. While he was editing "The Church Times," Mr. Sidney Dark once asked me how "The Christian World" came to lose its small "Situations Wanted" and "Situations Vacant" advertisements, as "The Church Times" still drew a large and steady revenue from that source. Rather cynically I suggested that there had been a time—but it had passed—when, if a Nonconformist wanted a pigman or a gardener, he advertised in "The Christian World" for a Nonconformist pigman or a Nonconformist gardener, and stipulated that he should be a tectotaler. But Nonconformists, I told Mr. Dark, were broadening in each succeeding generation, while Anglo-Catholics were narrowing, since, judging from the advertisements in "The Church Times," an Anglo-Catholic in need of a "tweeny" or a "general" stipulated that applicants should be Anglo-Catholic "tweenies" and Anglo-Catholic "generals." Though I advanced this theory in a jocular spirit, I believe there is an element of truth in it.

Another factor of which, at first, full account was not taken by the sons of James Clarke, was that Dr. William Robertson Nicoll had come from Scotland to London. He was very soon a force in literary and journalistic London. He founded "The British Weekly," and it quickly had a large and growing circulation among Free Church people interested in books and personalities. Dr., or as he later became, Sir William Robertson Nicoll, was three men in one—a mystic in religion, a litterateur

with a shrewd eye for a best seller, and an ardent politician. This combination made him a successful editor, and, in the long run, a powerful influence and a man to be feared. He had enemies and detractors. His habit of reviewing the same book in several different papers exasperated some authors. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle said that speech might be silvern and silence golden, but all criticism was Nicoll. It is well to speak of men as we find them, and I must say that Robertson Nicoll was to me kindness itself. When I published my first book Sir William gave it its first review, and a very favourable one, with a generous personal note about the author. Once, in a letter, he told me that he "coveted my services," and whenever we met he was cordial and even affectionate. Nicoll was not all things to all men. He could say waspish things, and when he disliked a man he disliked him intensely. Of a certain popular preacher he said, "There's nothing to him but a heid of hair—and he's losing it." Dr. Parker said of him, "When you meet Nicoll you get along splendidly in conversation until you say something with which he does not agree, and then, lo, your head is rolling on the floor." Nicoll claimed that he "made J. M. Barrie," but I heard Barrie say himself that "Frederick Greenwood invented me."

One curious experience with Robertson Nicoll clings in my memory. There was a streak of forgivable vanity in him, and he certainly did not object to being lionised. He and I were guests of Dr. Rendel Harris at a party that he threw at Cambridge (*circa* 1906, I think), in connexion with the National Free Church Council's annual conference. It was a large party, including Dr. Adolf Deissmann, Dr. Richard Glover, Dr. T. Reaveley Glover, Mr. (now Dr.) H. G. Wood, the Rev. Thomas Law, and Gipsy Smith. After lunch at the University Arms Hotel, Dr. Nicoll and I went to the smoking room. He filled his pipe and asked me if I had a match. I gave him a box. "But," he almost gasped, "they are not Bryant and May's." No other matches would do for him, and he went out to his overcoat to get his own box. He always smoked Bryant and May's matches—"smoked" them is the right verb, as he used a dozen matches to every pipe of tobacco, and strewed the stalks around him in the process. We went down the Cam in the afternoon, in a large

launch, with Clayhithe as our objective. As I knew almost every yard of the river between Cambridge and Ely I was appointed helmsman. Robertson Nicoll amused himself by constantly reminding me of my responsibility for the safety of such an august company. We had tea on the lawn of the delightful riverside inn at Clayhithe. Then Robertson Nicoll asked me if I would stay, and go back to London by train with him. Clayhithe is close to Waterbeach, where Charles H. Spurgeon began his ministry, and Dr. Nicoll had promised to preach at the little Baptist Church. People were gathering from far and near to hear him, and the lawns of the Clayhithe Hotel were serving as a rendezvous. Nicoll and I walked about among the people, and it was evident that his presence was attracting attention. "Porritt," he said, "I think many of these people would like to shake hands with me, if there was someone to introduce them." I half suspected that he would have liked me to do the introducing, but I fought shy of that job. We returned to London by the late train to Liverpool Street. It had been a hot day and the night was distinctly warm. The compartment which Nicoll and I shared was stuffy when we got in, but Nicoll insisted on the windows being shut up till not a breath of fresh air could enter. He smoked from Cambridge to London, while I gasped for breath. Nicoll did not believe in fresh air. Nor had he any use for exercise. He had only one lung, and feared a draught above all things. He was a worshipper of success, and his daughter put it on record that as children they were taught that it was not worth while to cultivate the friendship of people who had not succeeded. "Punch" called Robertson Nicoll "the most successful Christian of his time." Notwithstanding all his foibles I admired him, and I cherish my memories of the kindness he showed me through many years.

Sometime around 1880, "The Christian World" had reached a circulation of 130,000 copies a week—which in those days was a very large circulation indeed for a paper making a strictly middle-class appeal. Those were its golden days. By opposing Gladstone's 1886 Home Rule Bill the paper shed some thousands of readers, as again it did when, in 1901-05, it opposed "passive resistance" to the Balfour Education Acts. The raising of its

price from one penny to twopence, owing to the paper shortage, during the 1914-18 war, made further inroads, while the decline of public interest in religious matters, and the slump in Church attendances and Sunday Schools, which had set in with the new century, added to the retrogression. When I assumed the editorship in 1925 the circulation was just below 30,000 a week. Other religious newspapers—except the Roman Catholic "Universe"—were, I have good reason to think, prejudicially affected in the same way. The halcyon days of the religious press were over—though its influence remains in a degree far beyond the measure of its circulation, because so many of its readers are themselves people who influence public opinion.

Nonconformity sacrificed much of its salutary political influence when its opposition to the Balfour Education Acts took the form of "passive resistance" to payment of local rates out of which (for the first time) subventions were made to denominational schools. A very large number of responsible Free Churchmen however refused to be stampeded by Dr. Clifford, Dr. Robertson Nicoll, The Rev. C. Silvester Horne, and other Nonconformist leaders into defiance of the law. All through Nonconformist history—from 1662 to 1902—Nonconformists, while struggling for religious liberty and equality, had respected constitutional methods of agitation for the redress of grievances. But the Balfour Acts—forced through the Commons and eagerly accepted by the House of Lords—seemed to many the last straw breaking the camel's back. The "passive resisters" refused to pay only that proportion of their rates which they calculated would go to sustain denominational instruction in the schools. Distraint warrants were issued, and a clock or a silver tea-pot (selected by the resister for the express purpose) was taken away by the police and sold by auction. Often the distrainted article was bought back by the resister, or someone acting as his agent, and kept handy until the next distraint, when the process was repeated. Mr. Winston Churchill dubbed it "pantomimic martyrdom." Passive resistance virtually ceased when a Liberal Government came into office in 1906. I have always felt that this lapse of respect for law and order set a precedent for the more violent defiances which followed in

the Women's Suffrage campaign and the Ulster Rebellion against Irish Home Rule.

I found myself more sympathetic with the agitators for votes for women than with the Nonconformist passive resisters, though any enthusiasm I might have had was often chilled by their violent methods. I was shocked when in February 1914, a group of Suffragettes "brawled" in Regent's Park Chapel, where the saintly Dr. F. B. Meyer was then minister, and, in the midst of Divine Service, chanted a prayer for Miss Emmeline Pankhurst. Dr. Meyer was equal to the occasion. He promptly gave out a hymn of Charles Wesley's, one verse of which contained the lines "Oh, that I could for ever sit with Mary at the Master's feet." The enfranchisement of women was a reform overdue. Women had agitated for the vote for years, in constitutional fashion, and many of them came honestly to believe that without resort to violence their demand for the vote would go unheeded for ever. My most vivid memory of the Suffragette campaign is of a meeting in the Albert Hall at which Mr. Lloyd George was to announce a Cabinet decision concerning votes for women. Mr. Horace Holmes had undertaken to play the organ at this meeting, and he managed to smuggle my friend F. A. Atkins and me into the organ seat to turn over the pages of his music. From the organist's bench we watched the Albert Hall meeting become a bear garden. Mr. Lloyd George's message from the Cabinet was regarded as unsatisfactory, and at once there were "scenes" all over the hall. One Suffragette, armed with a dog-whip, lashed ferociously at the stewards as they approached to turn her out. The stewards were, I must confess, rather ruthless in handling the disturbers. At one point Mr. H. W. Nevinson, famous as a war correspondent, and always a chivalrous champion of the oppressed, strode down the aisle to reproach Mr. Lloyd George for the rough treatment of the women. He was promptly ejected by the stewards. Then pandemonium broke out all over the hall. Atkins and I tried to persuade Mr. Horace Holmes to play a popular melody of that day, "Put me among the girls." He shook his head, but played the air "Oh dear, what can the matter be?"—with surprising effect. A roar of laughter went through the excited

audience, and what might have become a riot ended in merri-  
ment.

No man could be engaged for years on the staff of "The Christian World," which seeks to serve all the Free Churches and to take a benevolent interest in all religious life and thought, without becoming something of an interdenominationalist himself. That however is not to be confused with undenominationalism, which is a very different thing. Denominationalism, *per se*, long ago ceased to concern me deeply. Ancestral voices, echoing in my soul, have made me loyal to Congregationalism, since a break with a long succession of family links would be an offence to my best instincts. I love the Book of Common Prayer, especially the collects and the "heart-caressing" Psalter, and, in my later years, I have often found a benison for my spirit by sitting quietly in my village Church with its hallowed associations and present-day serenity. The orderliness of the Presbyterian system has a definite attraction for me, especially its provisions for guarding the ministry against lay tyranny and the laity against ministerial domination. Methodism—though it seems to me, sometimes, that its over-organization tends to quench its spirit, compels my admiration, and John Wesley has been one of my heroes ever since he escaped from the clutches of the idolatrous Wesleyan biographers who saw only the founder of Methodism in the wonderful little giant who changed the face of England. A Methodist woman historian, greatly daring, has attributed the triumph of the Methodist revival to two women—the "uncomfortable" wives of Wesley and Whitefield, who toured England to escape them! The sturdy independence and passionate devotion of Baptists to their cardinal principle of adult baptism wins my respect. My Huguenot ancestry and dread of priestcraft combine to chill any sympathetic regard I have for Roman Catholic piety, but I have to confess that all the Roman Catholics I have known have been "such nice people." During my lifetime marginal issues which accentuated the divergences between the Churches have come to count for far less than in my early years—which is salutary and wise in an age like this.

## SOME NOTABLE JOURNALISTS

*Harry Jeffs, a remarkable man—Frederick Peaker, a versatile journalist—Thomas Colsey, the man who brought down Horatio Bottomley—The Berry brothers—Sir Maitland Park—A story of David Masson—Meeting William Allen White*

FOR over a quarter of a century I shared a room in "The Christian World" office in Fleet Street with Harry Jeffs, a very remarkable man—a man of a type that we are not likely to see again. He was a peculiar product of the latter half of the nineteenth century (from 1870 onwards) when, almost unaided young men struggled for self-education, and achieved it in a wonderful way. While serving his apprenticeship as a printer he taught himself Greek and Latin, and went on to steep himself in classical literature. Later he acquired Hebrew, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. At fifty-four, when the Great War broke out, he began to teach himself Russian. He had a drawerful of South Kensington certificates for arts and sciences, but mathematics floored him. He taught himself music, and got endless satisfaction from merely reading the score of operas and symphonies. He gathered an enormous collection of books in half-a-dozen languages—mainly picked up in the barrows of Farringdon Street or the twopenny boxes in Holywell Street. After being a bookworm and rather a recluse for many years he blossomed out as a public speaker and lay preacher, became a leader of the Brotherhood Movement, and the author of several books for preachers. He was something of an oddity in his black frock coat, battered silk hat, trousers two inches too long, and eye-glasses awry, and he drifted along Fleet Street so totally oblivious of things around him that his son Ernest H. Jeffs (now editor of "The Christian World") was wont to declare that an angel was told off every morning to guard his father when he crossed a road. Jeffs had qualities of mind, heart, and soul, that singled him out for my admiration, respect, and affection. He was a loyal colleague, a staunch friend, and a high

mind Christian man, and my memories of him are lovely and pleasant. Once on one of his journeys—or it may have been a voyage—Jeffs met a charming Roman Catholic priest. They talked together and became good friends. On parting, Jeffs asked the priest whether he thought—not as a priest of the Roman Church but as an individual—that he (Jeffs) being a heretic, had any hope of happiness in the life to come. The reply of the understanding priest was: “Well, Mr. Jeffs, speaking quite unofficially, mind, I think you stand as good a chance as some of our fifteenth century popes.” I think the first Great War, shattering all his dreams and hopes, broke his heart. To him it seemed that his world had collapsed. Gradually he dropped back into bookishness and cultivated his garden until his end came in 1938 before the second world war crashed upon us all. Happily he was spared the sight of London after the blitz.

For many years the leading article in “The Christian World” was written, when the subject was political or educational, by Frederick Peaker, a prominent figure in the Institute of Journalists and, indeed, its one-time president. Peaker was a Yorkshireman, a town councillor of Leeds, and an elementary schoolmaster, who, when approaching forty, threw up his job and came to London “to court the merry jade of Journalism.” He was very soon on his feet, and within a year or two was assistant editor of “The Schoolmaster.” When the Balfour Education Bill was introduced we felt it necessary for “The Christian World” to have as a regular contributor someone who knew the whole elementary education system from A to Z. Dr. Macnamara, whose advice I sought, recommended Frederick Peaker. “He is as reliable as the ‘Encyclopaedia Britannica,’” said Macnamara. So the association, a very happy one on both sides, came into being. It was not even interrupted when Peaker joined the editorial staff of “The Morning Post” to deal with labour and economic questions, upon which he had made himself an authority. Peaker always had a supply of good stories and he was a racy and entertaining talker. One of his best stories was about an experience of his own. It illustrates the fact that a journalist is sometimes expected to add two and two together and make the answer five. While a coal strike was upsetting



trade, a railway strike—which would have been even more disastrous—was threatened. Mr. George R. Askwith, the Board of Trade Industrial Commissioner, who made a reputation for himself as an arch-conciliator in trade disputes, was dealing with both the coal strike and the threatened railway strike, and the negotiations about the latter were at a crisis. Peaker wrote his “copy” about the railway negotiations one evening, and then—it was ten o’clock—left word that what he had written was not to be given out to the printers until eleven o’clock when he would be back. He took a cab to the Board of Trade office, where he was well known, and sent up a message to Mr. Askwith that he would like to see him. They were on terms of some intimacy, and Peaker was shown up to Mr. Askwith’s room. Things in the room were not as usual. In addition to Mr. Askwith and his secretary, Mrs. Askwith and the secretary’s wife were present, and in one corner there was a dining table at which, evidently, the little party of four had just eaten an elaborate dinner washed down with champagne. “Now, Peaker, what do you want from me at this time of night?” asked Mr. Askwith. “Anything you can give me about the strike,” answered Peaker. “Well, I’m sorry, Peaker, but I can’t say anything about the railway strike; but what time do you go to press?” “The Morning Post’s first edition,” said Peaker, “goes down at midnight, but other editions go at one o’clock and two o’clock, and if need arises there can be later special editions at three or even five o’clock.” “Yes, I see,” said Mr. Askwith, “but I can’t tell you anything. But,” (with a sudden change in the tone of his voice) “you must have a glass of wine.” “But,” said Peaker, “you know I’m a teetotaler.” “Yes,” retorted Mr. Askwith, “but you simply must have a glass of wine to-night; the occasion demands it.” A glass of port wine was handed to Peaker, who took a sip of it, and then hurried away. Ten minutes later he was back at “The Morning Post” office, where he tore up the “copy” he had written earlier in the evening, and wrote “The railway dispute has been settled on terms that will be announced later in the day.” This single line paragraph, which only “The Morning Post” was able to publish that morning, was one of the many “exclusives” to the credit of Frederick

Peaker. He was a good all-round journalist and a trusty friend. Leeds University conferred upon him its honorary M.A. degree—an honour which naturally delighted him.

A very old and dear friend of mine, Thomas Colsey, was the man who brought down Horatio Bottomley. Colsey was on the staff of "Truth" for nearly fifty years—first as a regular outside contributor, then as sub-editor, and latterly as editor. His disposition was too retiring for him to become a prominent figure, but in his own field he was a very accomplished and public-spirited journalist who, through "Truth," made the lives of many swindlers and rogues extremely uncomfortable. His dossiers about doubtful characters were carefully kept, and he rarely made a slip when he indicted a rascal in "Truth." In quest of facts he was a sleuth-hound, and he was fearless in unmasking any man whom he found exploiting the public. Horatio Bottomley had evaded the law until Thomas Colsey exposed him. In his book, "Without Prejudice: Impressions of Life and Law," Sir Chartres Biron tells the story. He was the magistrate before whom Bottomley appeared in the case that led to his imprisonment, and he writes: "Bottomley had managed to fool some people all the time—more than one could have thought possible. He fooled many most of the time. The paper 'Truth' did remarkable service in exposing his dishonesty. The attack was admirably done. No statement was made without facts and figures which were unassailable: even the most credulous began to have doubts. Every week the merciless exposure in 'Truth' went on. At last the greatest criminal of his time was brought to book. Bottomley was charged with stealing £100,000, the property of holders of Victory Loan shares, and was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude." A Member of Parliament who had known Bottomley when he was an M.P. visited Maidstone prison one day and came upon Bottomley stitching mail bags. He gave him a nod of recognition. "Sewing?" he asked. "Reaping," replied the unabashed Bottomley. Bottomley's effrontery was always egregious. He banked on his faith that "there is a new mug born every minute." To his business manager at the "John Bull" office, who was dismissing an errand boy for pilfering stamps Bottomley said, "Don't be too hard on

the boy. We all have to start from the bottom." Colsey's signal service in bringing an end to Bottomley's rapacious rascality received no recognition—not even an O.B.E. was offered him. Mr. H. W. Massingham, who had no personal knowledge of Colsey and evidently thought he was a poor aged journalist, suggested in "The Nation" that he should be given a Civil List Pension, a suggestion which made Colsey furious. The time came when Colsey was less eager to expose rascals. "Truth," which often had to fight libel suits, had on several occasions been mulcted in heavy damages awarded by juries in cases where the plaintiffs were very doubtful people, and had suffered no moral or material injury from "Truth." Colsey reached the conclusion that when fools on juries were so capricious it was not to be expected that a newspaper should run risks to protect other fools against swindlers.

When Colsey was sub-editor of "Truth" it was his duty to keep a firm hand on the copy Mr. Henry Labouchere (then proprietor of "Truth") sent from Florence, where he had made his home. Colsey cut out vast quantities of Labby's "copy" for the "*Entre nous*" notes; but he never had a line of protest from Labouchere. One of Labby's odd habits was to take out his false teeth, place the dentures on the "Truth" luncheon table, and eat with his toothless gums. This drove Colsey to lunch at the National Liberal Club, where for many years he and I sat at the same table. Colsey spent his boyhood at Worcester and recalled the dance band composed of members of the Elgar family—including the distinguished composer who became Sir Edward Elgar—which used to journey in a small brake to play at dances given by county people in Worcestershire. Mr. Colsey could never be persuaded to take a proper holiday. He was only once out of England, which was when he visited the Army in France during the Great War. He did not retire until he was about seventy-five. The zest for life died within him when his working days closed. He fell dead in the road coming away from Walton Hill Golf Course—mourned by all who recognized his sterling qualities and his long disinterested service to the gullible people who are the natural prey of financial sharks and begging-letter writers.

The two Berry brothers, William and Gomer, now Lords Camrose and Kemsley, and high in the hierarchy of Press Peers, came to London (*circa* 1905) predestined to succeed. Their father, Alderman J. M. Berry, J.P., of Merthyr Tydfil, was a prominent figure in Welsh Congregationalism, and his sons, on coming to London, associated themselves with Paddington Chapel. There Mr. Gomer Berry found his first wife, in the daughter of my old friend Mr. Horace Holmes, a sister of Mr. J. Stanley Holmes, M.P. The brothers joined the National Liberal Club, where I frequently met them, and had many delightful talks with them. They were brimful of ideas and projects, had a superabundance of energy and vitality, and an immense faith in each other. I felt certain then that they would go far and get there quickly. At that time they were running a weekly paper called "Boxing." It was just about this time that Jack Johnson, the negro pugilist, came to England to fight for the world championship with a British "White Hope." "Boxing" was boosting Jack Johnson, and the Berry brothers tried hard to persuade me to go out with them to New Barnet, where Jack Johnson had his training quarters: but I was not tempted. The fight was eventually called off in consequence of a widespread protest led by Dr. F. B. Meyer against pitting a white man against a black man. The Berry brothers next acquired a weekly comic paper called "Pick Me Up," which was noteworthy for its clever line drawings, and for its excellent caricatures (Max Beerbohm contributed some of them). The ball was now at their feet, and success followed success. Both brothers are now magnates in the newspaper world, and both are active in philanthropic work. Lord Camrose has to his credit the very rare achievement of re-invigorating and restoring to triumphant success a newspaper ("The Daily Telegraph") which had fallen from popular favour, and, at one time, seemed destined to suffer extinction. And this has been achieved without any resort to sensationalism. The last time I saw Lord Camrose he was getting out of his Rolls-Royce at the "Daily Telegraph" office in Fleet Street. He greeted me with a lordly wave of the hand.

Sir Maitland H. Park, for many years editor of "The Cape Times," and prior to that, editor of "The Pioneer" at Allahabad,

visited Britain in 1908 for the Imperial Press Conference. He brought an introduction to me from a journalist friend in South Africa, and I had several interesting conversations with him. Park had been staying in his native Scotland, and was rather shocked, I think, to find so much of the Highlands given over to sport, involving the employment of men who, he thought, ought to be engaged in productive work, as caddies, beaters, and ghillies. "England, and Scotland, too," I remember him saying, "is carrying too many deadheads—men who live for sport without doing any work. An industrial country like Great Britain cannot afford to keep idlers and their retinues." "There will be trouble very soon if it continues," he added. He had been living in India and South Africa for many years, and was apprehensive about the future status of England in the world. Though a stout Conservative himself he saw the need for radical reforms in our social order. Dr. Park (as he was then) was a Glasgow University graduate and an honorary LL.D. He had been visiting Edinburgh, and one day had gone to the University to see the room in which Professor David Masson formerly lectured on literature. An old janitor who showed him the lecture room remembered Masson, and gave Dr. Park some of his memories of the old professor. "When auld Davit," he said, "was lecturing, I often glued my ear to the keyhole to hear what he was saying, but it is nae worth while doing that with this new man." Professor George Saintsbury was the "new man," and he had already held his professorship for nineteen years!

When the World Economic Conference was meeting in London in 1927, Dr. Paul Hutchinson of "The Christian Century" (Chicago) introduced me to William Allen White. There was no man on earth that I wanted to meet more than William Allen White. He edited a little paper, "The Gazette," in a small one-horse Kansas prairie town called Emporia—a place about as big as Ashby-de-la-Zouch—but he was one of the powers behind the throne in American affairs. His pen was a sceptre. His articles in the Emporia "Gazette" were quoted all over the United States. Politicians of the highest rank often broke their trans-Continental journeys to talk things out with

William Allen White. He had not to chase subjects for interviews. The "interviewees" waited on him at Emporia and then weighed his opinions. He was himself a Republican, but Democrats consulted him, realizing that his broad outlook and sagacious judgment transcended even the sharply drawn party lines of American politics. Early in the second world war he foresaw that victory by the Allies was essential for American well-being, and in 1940 he founded the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. He was, possibly, the most influential publicist in the English-speaking world. It is one of the ironies of life that my meeting with William Allen White lasted only about a quarter of an hour. It was my "press day" when every minute was mortgaged, and he was due back for a crucial session of the Economic Conference. So we met "as ships that pass in the night." In appearance William Allen White did not realize my expectations. I do not know what I expected; but I did not expect a burly, bluff, hearty man, with a weather-worn round face, a man at once alert and phlegmatic, grave and witty and cynically humorous, sure of himself, yet unaffected and without pose. He did not look the part of a man who has made Emporia the "pulse and temperature chart of the United States of America." I read everything he wrote that came my way, and I admired his courageous stand for the under-privileged of the world. On the day we met he was fuming with exasperation at President Franklin Roosevelt for having dynamited the World Economic Conference. William Allen White apparently believed that the conference might have saved Europe from economic chaos, and the world from another devastating war. Perhaps later he would have agreed that Ramsay MacDonald convened the conference before the world was ripe for it. It was prematurely born, and inadequately prepared for. Its failure gave a fillip to the economic nationalism which precipitated the world war of 1939. I cherished a hope that I might again meet William Allen White, the man who had known everyone, had been everywhere, and yet had escaped the pontifical manner one usually associates with very well informed men. But he died at Emporia in January 1944, at the age of seventy-four.

## CHAPTER IX

### ABOUT POLITICIANS

*Speakers who "Turned Votes" in the House of Commons—Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland—Lord Randolph Churchill*

SPEECHES that actually turn votes in the House of Commons are very rare indeed. There have been only two in the last fifty years, I believe, though John Burns told me once that he had effected the miracle: but Burns had a habit of self-dramatization, and he always believed that what man could do he could do, and had, in fact, done. The only two vote-changing speeches I remember—and I had the good fortune to hear both—were Sir Henry Fowler's defence of his Indian cotton duties in 1895, and Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell's speech against the Revised Prayer Book Bill in 1927. In my opinion, Sir Henry Fowler's was much the greater of the two speeches. He had also a more critical situation confronting him, i.e. the very life of the Government, which, at best, had a normal majority of barely forty in the House of Commons. All the Lancashire Liberal members were furiously opposed to any duties being imposed on cotton cloth going into India. They openly avowed their intention to vote against them, even if the Government fell in consequence. I remember watching Mr. Tom Ellis, the Government Chief Whip, when the attack opened. He was palpably alarmed, and fidgeted with his watch chain, his cuffs, and his Order of the Day. He was in a state of nervous restlessness. Sir Henry Fowler was a Methodist lawyer from Wolverhampton—a hard, dour man he seemed to me—but he was a powerful speaker and he could array facts and arguments with convincing deftness. In his great cotton duties speech he triumphed by sheer force of argument, meeting the Lancashire members' contention that he was sanctioning Protection for Indian cotton manufacturers by proving that the countervailing duties imposed on Indian-made cotton cloth balanced the import duties imposed on Lancashire cotton goods. He knocked the bottom out of the case of the revolvers. Un-

questionably Sir Henry Fowler changed votes by that historic speech.

Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell's speech on the 1927 Prayer Book also changed votes; but it was a speech on quite another plane. It was an appeal to Protestant sentiment, and even prejudice. The 1927 Prayer Book would have authorized priests of the Church of England to reserve (under clearly defined regulations) the sacramental elements and to keep them within an aumbry inside the Church building, where there was at least a possibility that they might become an object of worship. Behind the obvious issue was the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Upon that Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell fastened, and with extraordinarily dramatic power he acted the part of a priest taking the wafer and blessing it and causing "something to happen." I never saw the House of Commons listen in such a hushed and awesome silence to any speaker. He cast an almost uncanny spell over his hearers. The tension was painful. The House was swayed by emotion. I have often wondered whether an interjection or a laugh might not have broken the spell and wrecked the great speech. When Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell sat down a sigh, as of relief, came from the crowded benches, and members flocked out to the Lobbies to talk, not about the Prayer Book Bill, but the effect Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell's devastating speech would have on the division. Lord Hugh Cecil, who spoke after Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell, and who had always commanded the attention of the House, utterly failed to undo the mischief done to the Prayer Book Bill. His speech was—in theatrical parlance—an absolute flop. Mr. Sidney Dark, then editor of "The Church Times," who sat just below me in the gallery, turned to me and despairingly asked: "Who is going to save this Bill now?" The face of Dr. Randall Davidson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was in the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery, was a study in bewilderment. It is merely to record a fact of history that I add that the Prayer Book Bill was rejected. Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell had battered it to death. Moreover he had relighted the candle of Protestant feeling all over the country, and when the Prayer Book Bill was, very unwisely, I think, submitted to Parliament again in the next session it met with a similar fate once more.



Through Sir Wilfred Grenfell I made the acquaintance of Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, who was Minister of Labour in the Baldwin Government of 1924-1929, a ripe scholar and an old Oxford rowing Blue. Sir Arthur was a political economist and statistician, and, as a Birmingham M.P., an ardent Tariff Reformer. Like Mr. A. J. Balfour he had the type of mind that sees both sides of every question, but unlike Mr. Balfour, he never came down plump on one side. On some subjects he was what Americans call a *mugwump* (defined by an American wit as a man who sits on a fence with his *mug* facing one way and his *wump* the other). This indecisiveness was a source of weakness to Sir Arthur when he sat on the Front Government Bench: and he was never quite the Parliamentary success that his attainments would have justified. I heard him say once that he was a Tariff Reformer, not a Protectionist. "But," he said, "when I hear some of our Conservatives talking Protection, I'm almost driven back to Free Trade, until I hear some Free Traders defending *laissez faire*, and then I am almost in the Protectionist camp myself." Sir Arthur was crossing the Atlantic with Sir (then Dr.) Wilfred Grenfell, and on the second day out Grenfell told him that he had just met the girl he intended to marry. The lady was Miss Anne MacClanahan, of Lake Forest, Illinois, of Scottish ancestry, and a graduate of Bryn Mawr—a tall, charming girl, vital and vivacious. Grenfell was never the man to let the grass grow under his feet, and before the liner reached New York he was engaged to Miss MacClanahan, and they were married scarcely less expeditiously. And they lived happily ever afterwards!

Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland was interested in the London School of Economics, and made it a habit to drop in at the School fairly frequently. He would take a seat unobtrusively near the door of a class-room and listen to the professor, or tutor, directing the students' studies. One night he found a class being taught the elements of political economy by a young man named George W. Gough, and was struck by the young tutor's grasp and capacity. After the lesson he talked to Gough, told him that he had a natural bent for economics, and ought to go to the University and read economics. "But how can I do that?" Gough

replied, "I am an elementary school teacher with £200 a year, and a wife and two daughters to keep." To Gough's amazement Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland brushed these difficulties aside. "You go to Oxford, and I'll pay the bill, and I will see that your wife and daughters get the same money that you give your wife now for their maintenance." Gough, who told me this story himself, said it was all done quietly and unostentatiously—as if Sir Arthur had taken out his cigarette-case and said: "Have a fag, Gough?" The upshot was that Gough went to Balliol, where, thanks to Steel-Maitland's friendly intervention, the Master (Dr. A. L. Smith) showed special interest in Gough's work. After a full course at Oxford, Gough took his degree, worked for a time under Mr. C. P. Scott on "The Manchester Guardian," and then returned to London to prepare pamphlets and outlines of speeches for the Free Trade Union, then campaigning against Joseph Chamberlain's Tariff Reform proposals. Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, though by this time head of the Conservative Party office, raised not the slightest objection to the use Gough made of the training in economics for which he had paid.

Dr. A. L. Smith, the Master of Balliol when Gough was an undergraduate there, had a succession of daughters born to him—I think there were seven. His friends began to find congratulating him on the advent of another daughter somewhat awkward. One day "A. L." met the Master of another College in the High, and they stopped for a chat. "I see, Smith, from 'The Times,' that there has been another interesting event in your family," said the Master. "You know, all these daughters will be a great resource to you in your old age, Smith." "Yes," replied "A. L.," "But I am afraid I shall have to spend my old age in husbanding my resources."

Lord Randolph Churchill, having "forgotten Goschen," had ceased to be a power in politics: but he was a familiar and rather pathetic figure around the House of Commons in my first years in London. He was wholly unlike the caricatures of him. "Punch" (to whom he was "Little Randy") had led me to expect a diminutive figure of a man with prodigious moustaches. But Randolph Churchill was a rather imposing person until his last two or three years. In political circles men still talked, many

years after 1880-86, of the great days when Lord Randolph led the "Fourth Party," and made Mr. Gladstone's life an agony by his gadfly attacks on the G.O.M., while at the same time playing the rôle of a mosquito to his own party leaders. Lord Randolph was the son of a Duke, and he did not like the Conservative Party being led in the House of Commons by Sir Stafford Northcote (a St. Paul's Churchyard silk merchant) and Mr. W. H. Smith (the head of the great newspaper distributors). Churchill called Northcote "The Goat," and W. H. Smith "Old Morality." One night when some alteration was made in the orders of the day in Parliament, Lord Randolph blamed the two leaders furiously, and added: "This comes of Marshall dining with Snelgrove." Another time, when Sir William Harcourt was deputizing for Mr. Gladstone as leader of the House, he postponed a debate, to the great annoyance of Churchill, who had planned a snap division and described the procedure as "a damned swindle." "That," said Sir William Harcourt, "is the language of the Derby." "No, sir," replied the irrepressible Randolph, "it is the language of the hoax."

I believe that Mr. Winston Churchill inherited the robe that his father bought—but never wore—when he was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. Usually a new Chancellor buys his predecessor's robe, which is an elaborate, highly decorated affair and very costly. When Lord Randolph threw up the Chancellorship he opened negotiations, through an intermediary, with his successor, Mr. Goschen, for the sale of the robe: but Mr. Goschen would not buy. Lord Randolph was annoyed. "Who ever heard," he exclaimed, "of a Jew who was not ready to do a deal in old clothes?" Lord Randolph Churchill was fortunate in his biographer—his son, Winston Churchill. Biographies written by sons are rarely a success. But Winston Churchill's "Lord Randolph Churchill," published in 1906, when the author was thirty-two, has taken its place among the best biographies of the twentieth century. Lord Randolph Churchill's caustic wit seems to have been transmitted, along with his name, to his grandson, Mr. Randolph Churchill, M.P., son of Mr. Winston Churchill, or he may have acquired, rather than inherited, the gentle art of making enemies. A series of articles that he contributed to a

London weekly paper lost him some friends. When Mr. Randolph Churchill asked Mr. Noel Coward for a ticket for a new play he had written, Mr. Coward is said to have replied: "My dear Randolph. Here are tickets for my new show: one for yourself, and one for a friend—if you have a friend."

## FRONT BENCHERS

*Mr. F. E. Smith—Mr. J. L. Garvin—Mr. Joseph Chamberlain—Sir Edward Grey—Mr. Philip Snowden—What statesmen owe to their wives*

JUDGE WILLIS, a highly esteemed Baptist layman, dispensed justice with zeal and discretion at Southwark County Court, and might have lived his dutiful life through without being dragged into the limelight but for an unfortunate encounter with Mr. F. E. Smith. Judge Willis's ready sympathy sometimes ran away with him. It did so one day when F. E. Smith, K.C. (later Lord Birkenhead) appeared in his Court as counsel for a Tramway Company which was being sued for damages arising out of an accident in which a small boy had lost his eyesight. The conversation between Judge and Counsel ran thus:—

JUDGE WILLIS: Blind? Poor boy! Stand him on a chair, and let the jury see him!

F. E. SMITH: Perhaps your honour would like to pass him round the jury-box.

JUDGE WILLIS: That is a most improper observation.

F. E. SMITH: It was provoked by a most improper suggestion.

JUDGE WILLIS: Mr. Smith, you remind me of a saying by Bacon, the great Bacon, "youth and indiscretion are ill-wedded companions."

F. E. SMITH: You remind me of a saying by Bacon, the great Bacon, that "a much-talking judge is like an ill-tuned cymbal."

JUDGE WILLIS: You are offensive, sir.

F. E. SMITH: We both are: the difference is that I am trying to be, and you cannot help it. I who have been listened to with respect by the highest tribunal in the land am not going to be browbeaten by a garrulous old County Court judge!

When F. E. Smith entered the House of Commons in 1906 it was seen at once that the newcomer was a brilliant man. His maiden speech gave him front bench authority at once. The

Campbell-Bannerman Government had just come into office with the largest majority in electoral history, but F. E. Smith, with sublime audacity, poured contempt, ridicule, and disdain upon the whole Bench of Ministers, and lashed the Liberal back benchers with bitter scorn and lacerating irony. Old Press Gallery hands had heard nothing like it since Lord Randolph Churchill's day. F. E. Smith had stepped into the front rank of Parliamentary debaters. He was a famous man next day. The speech, as I learned afterwards from a Liverpool journalist who had reported F. E. Smith's meetings in the General Election Campaign, was a deft amalgam of the best points of the speeches which had won him his seat.

F. E. Smith never quite, perhaps, repeated his first dazzling triumph, though he always commanded a full house and was a debater of the very first rank. His political sincerity was often questioned and he gave the impression that he was a careerist, if a very brilliant careerist. Mr. G. K. Chesterton's withering poem ending with the cry "Chuck it, Smith!" struck deep, and F. E. Smith never quite lived it down.<sup>1</sup>

Three dicta by F. E. Smith (when he had become Lord Birkenhead) are worth noting. The first is: "It would be possible to say without exaggeration," he wrote, "of the miners' leaders that they were the stupidest men in England, if we had not frequent occasion to meet the mine-owners." The second occurs in a letter to Lord Reading, then Viceroy of India, when Lord Birkenhead was Secretary for India: "It seems to me that the differences that sunder Moslems and Hindus are not as bitter or as unbridgeable as those that divide Orangemen from the rest of Ireland." The third has a poignant tone in it: "How much better is life, and how much more paying it is," wrote Lord Birkenhead, "to be blameless than to be brilliant." He said once (in an article

<sup>1</sup> F. E. Smith had said that the Welsh Disestablishment Bill had "shocked the conscience of every Christian community in Europe." The last lines of G. K. Chesterton's poem ran:

For your legal cause or civil,  
You fight well, and get your fee;  
For your God or dream or devil  
You will answer, not to me.  
Talk about the pews and steeples  
And the cash that goes therewith:  
But the souls of Christian peoples . . .  
Chuck it, Smith!

in "The Daily Mail Year Book") that all our liberties were won for us by Nonconformists fighting to redress their grievances. Birkenhead had some fine traits. Sir John Harris used to say that he could get Lord Birkenhead's active help in trying to redress the grievances of native races far more easily than he could get Lord Grey interested. The story often denied, and, no doubt, invented, that when undergraduates together at Oxford—both with eyes fixed on the Woolsack—F. E. Smith and John Simon tossed up to settle who should go Liberal and who go Conservative, is not so irrational after all. F. E. Smith had a deep vein of Liberalism in his complex character, and John Simon has a strong Conservative stratum in his perplexing personality. In their Oxford days it was said of John Simon that he had all the virtues and no friends: of F. E. Smith that he had all the vices and hosts of friends.

Lord Birkenhead burnt himself out. He worked desperately hard, lived at a break-neck pace, turned day into night, was always heavily in debt, and broke down an iron constitution by overdoing everything. For his reckless extravagance a valid excuse may be made. One of the Liverpool Conservative members was a millionaire shipowner, who in return for Mr. F. E. Smith's valiant help at election times (their two constituencies were close together, and F. E. Smith fought the two contests as one) promised to leave Mr. Smith a legacy of a million pounds in his will. I believe that the will was duly signed and in perfect order. But just before his death the shipowner married a second time, and his will with its legacy to F. E. Smith became invalid. Meanwhile F. E. Smith had been living on his expectation of being a millionaire, and had piled up mountainous debts. This is the story as it was told to me in the Lobby of the House of Commons by a Parliamentary journalist who was certainly in a position, from long intimacy with Lord Birkenhead, to know the facts at first hand.

I hope that Mr. J. L. Garvin will live to complete his life of Joseph Chamberlain. I have read each volume as it has appeared, and I do not find any fault with any of them on the ground of prolixity. Mr. Garvin fills in the historical background so completely that his biographical study of Chamberlain becomes almost

a history of our own times—at least from the eighteen-sixties until 1910. Joseph Chamberlain bulked large in my early years in London. I felt the spell of his commanding personality whenever I heard him speak in, or out, of Parliament. I heard him frequently—the first time in 1885, when he was launching his Unauthorized Programme, and visited my native town of Warrington. Then I heard him say of Ireland: "God has made us neighbours: would to God He had made us friends." He was an unrepentant Radical then, just forgetting that he had been a Republican. He had not, at that time, discovered the British Empire. He was cold in manner, not in speech, and the slowest speaker of all the great orators I have heard. I found no difficulty, on more than one occasion, in dispensing with shorthand and taking down his speech in longhand. He said biting things in a hissing tone. He likened somebody to Herod in the House of Commons, and brought the retort "Judas!" upon himself. Then followed the ugliest scene the House of Commons has witnessed for many a long year—a free fight on the floor of the House. Lord Randolph Churchill, who was leading the opposition and saw the whole episode, denied in a letter to the Speaker, that the fracas arose out of the cry of Judas, stating that its origin was a rebellion against the Whips by Conservative back bench members who had been ordered to vote with the Government, and who refused to leave the House and go into the division lobby. That was then a gross violation of the Rules of the House, which have since been changed. Mr. Chamberlain had winced at the cry of "Judas," which he had provoked by his taunt of "Herod," but he ignored it, and Lord Randolph told the Speaker that he saw him smiling.

It has often occurred to me that the political history of the last fifty years might have been very different if Joseph Chamberlain had been sent by his father to Oxford or Cambridge instead of University College, London. This might have happened if his father, Joseph Chamberlain, a Camberwell boot-maker, had not been an uncompromising Dissenter (he was a Unitarian) and an advanced Radical politician. The Universities had just been opened to Dissenters by the abolition of religious tests, but Joseph Chamberlain senior was apparently afraid that the Tory



and Church atmosphere of Oxford, or even Cambridge, might undermine Joseph Chamberlain junior's ancestral Unitarianism and Radicalism. So neither of the two ancient Universities saw Joseph Chamberlain as an undergraduate in their midst. Having made a fortune in the screw business, caused Birmingham to become the most progressive municipality in England, and (as Mayor) entertained Royalty without flaunting his Republicanism, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain won a seat in the House of Commons. The way seemed opening for him to become the leader of the Liberal party whenever Mr. Gladstone died or retired. His prestige in the country was so great that his succession to the Premiership was regarded as inevitable. But Mr. Gladstone stood in the way. He entertained an old-fashioned idea that men educated at Oxford or Cambridge (preferably Oxford) had the divine right to high political office. He gave Mr. Chamberlain an office in his 1880 Cabinet, but there was always this barrier between the two men. Thirty years later Mr. Asquith, who also liked men who had taken double firsts, and been Presidents of the Oxford Union, as his colleagues, held Mr. Lloyd George aloof for the same reason. For a certainty we know now that Mr. Gladstone did not give Mr. Chamberlain his full confidence. When he was cogitating in 1886 over his plans for giving Home Rule to Ireland, Mr. Gladstone had Mr. Chamberlain as his guest at Hawarden for several days, but he did not disclose his plans to his colleague. To two other Cabinet colleagues who stayed at Hawarden Castle just before and immediately after Mr. Chamberlain's visit, Mr. Gladstone opened his mind freely. Mr. Chamberlain was a touchy man, and his discovery that he had not been given the confidence shown to his two colleagues rankled. Six months later Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Gladstone had parted company, the Liberal party was hopelessly divided, the Conservatives entered on a long period of power, and Mr. Chamberlain's hopes of the Premiership melted away. A friend to whom I had outlined this theory of the fundamental difference which led to the alienation of Joseph Chamberlain and Mr. Gladstone, mentioned my theory to Sir Austen Chamberlain over a dinner-table. Sir Austen was intrigued by the idea, agreed that there might be something in it but finally declared that the

deepest chasm between his father and Mr. Gladstone was on social reform ("My father," said Sir Austen, "was an ardent social reformer: Mr. Gladstone was not,") and that if the breach had not come on Irish Home Rule it would inevitably have come on some issue of social reform.

I have only seen Mr. Garvin once—when he spoke at a complimentary dinner to C. P. Scott of "The Manchester Guardian" on his editorial Jubilee, I think—but when he published the first volume of his life of Joseph Chamberlain I wrote expressing my appreciation of his sympathetic treatment of the Nonconformity in which Chamberlain was reared and politically moulded. In reply Mr. Garvin said that, as he worked through the material for the biography, he had come to see and admire "the religious spirit and discipline that really made him (Joseph Chamberlain) in his early life." Mr. Garvin learned his journalism under Joseph Cowan, that mighty Northumbrian orator and editor-proprietor of "The Newcastle Chronicle." Before he was twenty Mr. Garvin was a leader-writer (he had already been Charles Stewart Parnell's private secretary) and it is a testimony to his all-embracing knowledge that (without having had the advantage of a University education) he should have been entrusted with the editorship-in-chief of the fourteenth edition of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica." But I am rather disposed to think that Mr. Garvin's greatest service to the world was to persuade, cajole, bully, and stampede the House of Lords into the suicidal blunder of rejecting Mr. Lloyd George's famous Budget. That reckless step accelerated the greatest democratic reform of my lifetime—the Asquith "Parliament Act" which destroyed the power of the House of Lords to veto the Bills of a Liberal Government, while allowing those of a Conservative Government to pass almost automatically into law. The last vestige of the power of the Lords, over taxation was destroyed by the Act which Mr. Garvin did so much to provoke.

One rainy day at Lords in the summer of 1891 when cricket was impossible, and there was nothing to do in the press box but watch the starlings digging for earth-worms in the outfield, I strolled across with another cricket reporter to the old ivy-clad tennis court which then stood near the tavern. Tennis (the old

game, not lawn tennis) was something I had never seen played. Inside the covered court with its marble floor and walls I saw a young man, every inch of him patrician, playing a gruelling practice game with an older man who, I was told, was Peter Lathom, a very famous professional player. The young man was Sir Edward Grey. The next time I saw him was from the gallery of the House of Commons, and he was sitting on the Front Bench as Parliamentary Under-Secretary for War in the Liberal Government (1892-1895) with a great future, it was thought, opening before him. I heard him answering questions in a clear, resonant voice, admirably controlled, and dealing with "supplementaries" with deft skill, and the customary evasiveness of a minister who has no inclination to add anything to his formal reply to the question printed on the order paper. Sir Edward Grey was one of those rare men who, in some subtle way, create an atmosphere around themselves. His personality fascinated me, and from that day I watched his career until the day when I saw him—for the last time—being led into the smoke-room of the National Liberal Club, a blind and sad man whom the slings and arrows of misfortune had battered and bruised. Fate had indeed been merciless. Just when he had been appointed Foreign Minister his beautiful young wife was thrown out of a dog-cart and killed. His two homes—Falloodon, and a fishing cottage on the Itchen—were destroyed by fire. The peace of Europe which he struggled to preserve went up in flames in July 1914. Reading innumerable despatches and documents brought on blindness. Pathetically he said that he was left with only the last sport of all—hunting for his spectacles. He learned Braille and cheerily told a friend that one advantage of blindness was that he could read Braille in bed, with the book under the blankets, without getting his hands cold. Then his Braille-reading finger lost sensitiveness. So that last avenue was closed to him. A second marriage brought him happy companionship: then his second wife died, leaving him lonely, blind and despairing about the future. Professor G. M. Trevelyan's "Life of Grey" is one of the saddest biographies in our language, or it would be if it were not for Grey's invincible courage. I re-read it once a year—always to be thrilled again by the story

of Grey's stoicism in the face of crushing adversities. Grey's own book on "The Charm of Birds" is another of my favourite books. Grey's delight in the squirrels that came through his study window at Fallodon, and ate nuts out of his hand, strikes a sympathetic chord in my own nature. Mr. Winston Churchill in his "Great Contemporaries" records a conversation with Mr. Lloyd George during the Great War when both were critical of what they thought was the absence of vigour of Grey's Foreign Policy. Mr. Churchill said: "Well, anyway, we know that if the Germans were here and said to Grey: 'If you don't sign this treaty we will shoot you at once,' he would certainly reply: 'It would be most improper for a British Minister to yield to a threat: that sort of thing is not done.'" But Mr. Lloyd George rejoined: "That's not what the Germans would say to him. They would say: 'If you don't sign this treaty we will scrag all your squirrels at Fallodon'—that would break him down." Some years after Grey's death I was talking to Sir John Simon, then Foreign Secretary, in his room at the Foreign Office, and he led me to a large window overlooking St. James's Park and said: "Here is where Edward Grey stood on the night when war was declared on August 4th, 1914, and said to a friend (Mr. J. A. Spender): 'The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in my own lifetime.'" All his hopes of preserving peace were dashed. "I hate war, I hate war," he cried to Sir Arthur Nicolson on that fateful night. Professor Trevelyan says that Grey would go out of his way to avoid a company of Kitchener's recruits marching down the cheering street, because the sight cut him to the heart. In his last speech he said that it was Liberalism that made England what it is, and as long as people are what they are in this country they will be Liberal even if they do not belong to the Liberal Party.

My opportunities for meeting Mr. Philip Snowden were unfortunately too few. But they were sufficient to correct, for myself, the general impression that Mr. Snowden was a hard-bitten Yorkshireman with a sour spirit and a blistering tongue. Some of his public utterances certainly gave that impression. When he and Mr. Winston Churchill crossed swords neither strained the quality of mercy—the buttons were off the foils,

and each fenced to make the verbal kill. But the real Philip Snowden was not the Philip Snowden of the political arena. He had a very gentle side to his nature. When he smiled his stern face broke into tenderness. His laugh was infectious. He loved to tell Yorkshire dialect stories, and sing Yorkshire songs. If any bitterness entered into his make-up he could have pleaded that since early manhood he had had to drag an enfeebled body about on two sorely crippled legs. I never saw him making his painful contorted way, relying on two sticks, along the front bench of the House without a sense of deep sympathy, linked with profound admiration for the will-power that overcame his frightful disability.

Mr. Philip Snowden's infirmity lends the point to a story credited to Mr. James Maxton, the most popular man in the House of Commons. When Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was staying once at the Hillocks, his cottage at Lossiemouth, he invited Mr. Maxton to spend a week-end with him. During the two days they spent together Mr. MacDonald took Mr. Maxton for two walks over the moors—one of twelve miles, the other of ten. Mr. Maxton was not addicted to any exercise more arduous than rolling his own cigarettes, and he found tramping over hill and dale something of an ordeal. On his returning to Glasgow a friend asked him if he had had a nice quiet week-end at Lossiemouth. "A quiet week-end!" replied Mr. Maxton. "I've been on a walking tour; and I tell ye, the next time I go for a walking tour it won't be with Ramsay MacDonald—I shall go with Philip Snowden." When Mr. Winston Churchill, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, introduced a Budget embodying a tax on betting, Mr. Walter Runciman (now Lord Runciman) invited a little company, about ten in number (of whom I was one), to lunch at the House of Commons and to hear what Philip Snowden thought of the Budget. Candidly he said he did not think much of it—those were days when Winston Churchill and Philip Snowden were at daggers drawn, and did not think much of each other. Concerning the betting tax Snowden was scornful. He objected to it on moral grounds, because it implied State recognition of gambling, which he regarded as a vice inflicting untold injury on working-class homes. He also objected to the

tax because he believed it would be evaded, and would yield next to nothing to the Treasury. "Our man Jimmy Thomas," said Snowden, "who does a bit of betting on horses, said to me, an hour after Winston had announced his tax, that he had already found about eight different ways of diddling Winston out of his tax, and would show me how he could do it when I had a few minutes to spare in the Lobby." The tax was levied, evaded, and abandoned, just as Snowden prophesied.

Philip Snowden and his wife were splendidly complementary. They were equally proud of each other. Lady Snowden is a gracious and charming lady, an eloquent and powerful speaker, a passionate lover of fine music and a spirited conversationalist. An interesting book might be written on the indebtedness of public men to their wives. I remember the solicitude with which Mrs. Gladstone watched over "William." Mrs. Disraeli "cosseted" her husband, and brought him, by her wealth, freedom from the debts which had worried him until his marriage. Lady Campbell-Bannerman, though an invalid, was an immense help to her husband, and by putting her foot down firmly when Mr. Asquith, Mr. Haldane, and Sir Edward Grey were insisting that he should go to the House of Lords on becoming Prime Minister in 1905, saved him from what must have meant political extinction. Mrs. Lloyd George was a source of strength to Mr. Lloyd George in his early struggling days in Parliament. In his pro-Boer days, when his practice as a solicitor was falling away because his clients disagreed so intensely with his politics, Mrs. Lloyd George said that she would sooner keep their family going by taking in washing than that he should sacrifice his principles. Once when talking to me about his early years Mr. Lloyd George said his boyhood was hard, and he would not like to have to go back to those straitened days. "But," he added, "I do not think it would worry my wife if she had to live in a cottage." Mrs. Lloyd George preserved her simple Welsh ways amid all the changing circumstances of her life. She never had a man servant when she was mistress of 10, Downing Street, and she was faithful to the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel of her early upbringing. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has told the world in "Margaret Ethel MacDonald"—his classic biography of his

wife—how much he owed to her. Mrs. MacDonald's death plunged her husband into a deep abyss of solitude from which he never really emerged. He was a lonely man afterwards, and the aloofness about which his Labour party colleagues complained had its origin in the solitariness of his soul. He might have been spared some of the humiliation of his last years if Mrs. MacDonald had been at his elbow when he attained the highest office under the Crown. Mrs. Winston Churchill is a guardian angel to her husband. But Lady Oxford has told us that Mr. Winston Churchill is the best son, the best husband, and the best father she has ever known.

## MORE ABOUT POLITICIANS

*Wits in the House of Commons—Jack Jones—Sir John Ashley—Sir Wilfrid Lawson—Sir Edward Carson—"Tim" Healy—Sir Ellis Griffith—Augustine Birrell—A free fight in Parliament—Mr. Asquith howled down—Mr. Baldwin's "appalling frankness"—John Morley*

WHEN Mr. Jack Jones, the Labour M.P. for Silvertown, returned to the House of Commons after an illness, he was greeted with cheers from all sides of the House. The House was welcoming back its then accredited wit. The House of Commons seems to recognize only one wit at a time. Jack Jones held the title for several years. There was no flavour of midnight oil about the witticisms of the Labour member for Silvertown. His sallies were lightning flashes—unexpected, and sometimes devastating. A good instance associates Mr. Winston Churchill with Jack Jones. In his earlier years Mr. Churchill had an awkward hesitation of speech which he has almost completely conquered, so much so that occasionally he now even exploits it for oratorical effect. Speaking in the House of Commons he was presenting two alternative courses—one, in his view, wise, the other disastrous. He had argued the case for the first course, and insisted that it must be followed, "or"—he hesitated oratorically over the syllable—"or—a . . . or . . . a . . . or . . . a . . .," he said. "*Ora pro nobis*," ejaculated Jack Jones, and the House dissolved in laughter. Sometimes Jack Jones was exasperatingly witty. He once declared that the Conservative benches were full of men who thought of nothing but rent, interest and profit. "No, no," came cries of protest. "Yes, you do," retorted Jack Jones. "It's the only trinity you really believe in: that is why you put R.I.P. on your tombstones!"

The first Parliamentary wit I remember was Sir John Ashley, a fine, old crusted fox-hunting squire who sat for a Lincolnshire seat, and knew all there was to know about "huntin', fishin', and shootin'," but very little indeed about politics. One of his squibs still sparkles. A heckling constituent asked him what he



thought of Sir Wilfrid Lawson's Liquor Bill. Sir John was non-plussed: he had not heard of the measure. His reply was, "Well, I must say that I don't know much about Sir Wilfrid Lawson's Liquor Bill, but I know my own liquor bill was a damn sight too high last year." Sir Wilfrid Lawson was another Parliamentary wit whom I remember well. He was a humorist, too, with a sheaf of entertaining stories. His witticisms took shape generally in verses which used to find their way into the newspapers, headed "Picked up in the Lobby." One of the best was the epitaph:

"Here lie I in hope of Zion,  
The Landlord of The Roaring Lion;  
Obedient to the heavenly will,  
His son keeps on the business still."

Sir Wilfrid once entertained Mr. Gladstone to dinner, and there was much speculation as to whether the ardent teetotaler would provide the G.O.M. with his accustomed bottle of claret. Mr. Herbert Gladstone asked his father next morning what he had to drink at the dinner. "Water," replied Mr. Gladstone, "and not much of that."

Sir Edward Carson had some reputation as a wit, but he had earned it in the Law Courts, and his House of Commons manner was generally dour, and often savagely ironical. Once in the Law Courts he was cross-examining a witness. "Is it true you drink?" asked Carson. "That's my business," retorted the witness snappily. "Any other business?" drawled Carson. In his last years, when he was Lord Carson and had failed conspicuously as First Lord of the Admiralty, his asperity of manner softened, and he revealed a very affectionate side of his character. Sir Chartres Biron records in his volume of reminiscences that just before his death, Carson, in a dinner-table conversation, told him that, looking back, he thought a great mistake had been made in not letting Mr. Gladstone carry his first Home Rule Bill in 1886. It would have been a better settlement, he said, than Ireland finally got.

"Tim" Healy was most certainly a wit, but there was corrosive acid in his sallies, and the House of Commons never really liked that. Augustine Birrell said that Healy "loved everyone except his neighbour." A story goes that when Governor-General of

Ireland, Healy entertained Sir John Simon at the Viceregal Lodge in Dublin, and introduced Sir John to the high officers of the Irish Free State Army. Sir John observed later: "Healy, all your officers seem to be generals." "Yes," Healy replied, "and so were their mothers." Tim Healy's abiding reputation as a Parliamentary wit would be assured by one historic triumph over the Rules of the House. The future Government of Uganda was under discussion. Healy rose and made a long speech in which he stated and emphasized all the grievances of Ireland: taking care, however, to say Uganda whenever he meant Ireland. It was a masterpiece of artful irrelevance which the Speaker was helpless to check, so completely was Healy conforming to the rules. Healy's reference to little Joe Devlin, who was a flamboyant Irish orator, as "that duodecimo Demosthenes" added to the gaiety of Parliamentary life.

Wales provided the House of Commons with a wit of the first order in Sir Ellis Griffith—who might also have been marked out as the handsomest man in the House in his time. He was a brilliant man, who ought to have won great success both at the Bar and in Parliament, but somehow he fell below the expectations of all his friends, never got beyond an Under-Secretaryship, and died, I think, a disgruntled man. One day he stood in Palace Yard having his boots blacked. "What were you before you were a shoeblack?" he asked. "I worked on my father's farm," the man answered. "Is your father still a farmer?" "Yes, sir." "Oh, I see," said Ellis Griffith, "the father makes hay while the son shines." Ellis Griffith's best remembered jest was perpetrated in a discussion on the profits made by a Birmingham munition-making firm (in which one of the Chamberlains had an interest) during the Boer War. "As the British Empire expands," said Ellis Griffith, "the Chamberlain family contracts." Joseph Chamberlain, it is said, never forgave the thrust.

If I were not drawing a sharp distinction between Parliamentary wits and Parliamentary humorists, I should have to mention Mr. J. H. Thomas: but Mr. Thomas is better described as a "character" who was at one time a very popular figure in the House, though sometimes he was the butt of the wits. In his reminiscences Mr. Thomas lets us see that he was acutely conscious of his own

misuse of aspirates, which gave the wits their opportunity. "Pass Jimmy the spelling salts," Jack Jones hoarsely whispered when Mr. Thomas had been more than usually lavish with dropped "h's."

Sometimes it happens that a reputation for wit proves a handicap to a politician. Mr. Augustine Birrell, who invented the style of speech—half serious, half banter—which became known as "birrelling," suffered, I think, as a serious politician because of his light-hearted manner. From his autobiography it is evident that he was far from pleased at having added the word "birrelling" to the vocabulary. His wit survived his political fall over the Irish Rebellion. "I fell off a donkey," he said years afterwards, "but Lloyd George fell off an elephant." Better still, perhaps, is Birrell's dictum uttered in 1913 about the leadership of the Conservative party which, he said, saved the Liberal Government from plunging to its fall. "We dig our own graves every morning," said Birrell, "but Bonar Law comes along and fills them up every evening." Mr. Birrell did not always "birrell." I heard him make a long, deadly dull speech at a Nonconformist celebration in the City Temple in connection with Queen Victoria's second Jubilee. The speech was an historical essay on the constitutional settlement when William and Mary came to the throne in 1688. It had some oblique bearing on Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, but Mr. Birrell's audience could not see what. The speech fell flat, and those who had come to laugh at Mr. Birrell remained to yawn.

I am doubtful whether the possession of wit helps a politician. In England we take our politics, like our pleasures, sadly, and it may be our suspicion that wit is a symptom of levity which makes us pin our faith to the solid, ponderous men in politics. At all events, looking back over fifty years, I cannot remember more than one Parliamentary wit sitting on either front bench at the same time. There have been occasions when I have been thankful that I was not in the House of Commons, though, if given the choice, I would always prefer a seat in the gallery for a good Parliamentary debate to a stall for the best play or the best concert in London. I am glad, for example, that I was not there to see that horrible fracas on the floor of the House in July 1893, when

members fought with their fists while spectators in the gallery hissed, until Mr. Speaker Peel, called to quell the tumult, came with his eyes blazing with anger, and with stinging words restored members to their senses. Lord Randolph Churchill said that this was the most appalling scene he had ever witnessed and (in a letter to the Speaker) declared that if such disorder were not made impossible the House of Commons would go from bad to worse, and it was impossible to foresee to what extent it might change in a very short time. Again I should not like to have been in the House when Mr. Ronald J. McNeill (later Lord Cushenden) threw a book across the table at Mr. Winston Churchill, hitting him on the face. That, no doubt, was a momentary lapse from Parliamentary decorum, regretted, I am sure, by Mr. McNeill as soon as he had launched the missile. I am also very thankful that I was not a witness of that ugly scene when Mr. Asquith was kept standing at the Treasury box, unable to say one audible word, owing to the howls, jeers, and insults hurled at him from the Conservative benches, crowded with frenzied partisans determined that the Prime Minister should not make his statement about the Parliament Bill. No excuse of spontaneity can be offered for that scene. Lord Hugh Cecil and Mr. F. E. Smith openly assumed the rôle of ringleaders in a deplorable assault on the dignity of the House of Commons. The deplorable display distressed many of the Conservative members; Sir Alfred Cripps was one. He wrote a letter to Mr. Asquith expressing disgust at the way he had been treated, and before the House adjourned that night nearly seventy Conservative M.P.s attached their signatures to it. The letter was left at 10, Downing Street, and reached Mr. Asquith before he went to bed. F. E. Smith was exasperated at Sir Alfred's intervention and took his revenge when he and Sir Alfred had gone up to the House of Lords. Lord Parmoor (as Sir Alfred Cripps had become) had accepted an office in the MacDonald Labour Government, and for a time was the Labour party spokesman in the House of Lords. Lord Birkenhead (formerly Mr. F. E. Smith) seized every possible opportunity to humiliate and browbeat Lord Parmoor. He bullied, derided, scoffed, sneered, and held him up to ridicule, almost making Lord Parmoor's Parliamentary

life a misery, but winning for him the sympathy of many of the Tory peers who were shocked and dismayed at such glaring departures from the politeness and placidity with which debates in the Lords are customarily conducted. What added to the enormity of the offence was that Lord Birkenhead had sat on the Woolsack, and, as Lord Chancellor, presided over the proceedings of the House.

I am grateful beyond all words that I was not present to hear Mr. Stanley Baldwin, then Prime Minister, make a confession in the House of Commons, in November 1936, such as, I imagine, was never before heard within its walls. Speaking with what he himself called "appalling frankness," Mr. Baldwin said that if in 1935 he had used his great majority in Parliament to provide rearmament, it would have made the loss of the General Election certain. He therefore kept his belief in the necessity for rearmament to himself, and even announced that "there has not been, there is not, and there will not be, any question of huge rearmaments or materially increased forces." I almost think Mr. Baldwin's swift decline in prestige dated from the hour when he made confession that he deceived the British people on a life and death issue, in order to avoid a Conservative defeat at the General Election of 1935. As I say, I should not like to have heard Mr. Baldwin, whom I had deeply respected, owning up to what seems to me to have been a political crime of the worst order.

I have often, of course, been in the House of Commons when what the gallery correspondents call a "scene" has occurred, and when only the comedy aspect of it has remained in my memory. I remember the irrepressible Jack Jones being "named," and called upon to withdraw from the Chamber for some defiance of the chair. Jack Jones was a comedian born, and the House enjoyed, rather than resented, the waggish way he obeyed the Speaker's peremptory order to leave. He chose the longest route from his seat to the Lobby door, and walking along the gangway under the gallery paused at every pillar to ejaculate such comments on his fellow members as, "dirty dogs," "lousy louts," and "idle loafers." At each ejaculation by Jack Jones members laughed heartily, and the "scene" dissolved into good humour again in ten minutes. Since the Irish members left the House of Commons

"scenes" have been fewer and altogether less turbulent. The Labour party has, on the whole, sustained the dignity of the House by decorous behaviour, and submission to the rulings of the chair. Though there have been some momentary lapses, the Labour members have never staged an organized "scene" or defied the Speaker's authority.

There was a time when, to me, the most glamorous figure on the political stage was John Morley. "Honest John" they called him. His name was a symbol for robust Radicalism. He embodied, I then thought, all the virtues of a disinterested politician. But somehow the glamour of John Morley faded the more I heard and read of him. I recall my sense of disillusionment when I first heard him speak, somewhere in Hackney in 1890. I missed the glow and fire I had expected to find. He was cold and dispassionate, and gave me no thrill. I heard him speak again and again in the House of Commons and still he left me cold. Undoubtedly the man who had the courage (if it was courage) to spell God with a small "g" had the quality of bravery in political matters. But he must have been an awkward colleague. Mr. Asquith said he had a drawerful of resignations (tendered one day and withdrawn the next) from John Morley during his Premiership. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman hit off Morley's foibles by dubbing him "Priscilla." John Morley, it seemed to me, let himself down when he wrote his reminiscences. There is evidence of self-seeking, and even tuft-hunting, in the pages of that book. Morley looked like an ascetic. He gave the impression that he practised austere living. But he was something of a sybarite. He was a gourmet, a connoisseur of wine, and an exceedingly good judge of a cigar. Nor was he an unambitious man. When Gladstone died, and Lord Rosebery reconstructed the Cabinet, Morley wanted the Foreign Secretaryship. Lord Rosebery preferred Sir Edward Grey, and Morley ceased to be a Roseberian. Morley's "Life of Gladstone" is a monumental piece of biography—though perhaps too much of a mausoleum. Its tone is laudatory, and one might think that to Morley Gladstone had been a hero without a speck of clay on his feet. But in "The House of Macmillan" Mr. Charles Morgan quotes a letter from John Morley, written in 1877 to Alexander Macmillan, accepting an invitation to meet Gladstone

at dinner and ending thus, "N.B. Gladstone has nothing to say to men like you and me, but it is interesting to see the kind of men whom the world thinks great. Foolish world!" Twenty years later Morley exhausted the vocabulary of laudation in his biography of Gladstone. In which mood, I wonder, was "Honest" John sincere?

## JOHN BURNS

*The First Labour Cabinet Minister—Changes in the House of Commons—  
Experts in Parliament—Women in the House*

JOHN BURNS was a man very prominent in the public eye during my early years in London. I saw him first at a labour demonstration in Trafalgar Square—he was being pulled off the plinth of one of the Landseer lions by two policemen. I knew him well for forty years. His egotism, which really was colossal, never disturbed me, or diminished my admiration of his sterling qualities. Moreover, I felt that his achievements entitled him to have a good conceit of himself. He was the sixteenth child of the family, and when he was a lad of eight, he had been helping his mother to carry a heavy basket of washing to a house in Park Lane. As they rested on their weary midnight walk back to Battersea, he said, "Mother, if I have health and strength, no mother shall have to work as you have to work, and no child shall have to do what I have to do." His early experiences were variegated. He sang in a Church choir, worked as a page boy in buttons, and as a potboy in a public house. He grew up a hater of flunkeyism, a rigid teetotaler, and a non-smoker. One night as he saw the light in the clock-tower of the House of Commons he vowed, "Some day I shall be working under that clock." By 1892, when he was thirty-four, he was a member of Parliament. Thirteen years later he was the first working man to become a Cabinet Minister. "Henry," he said, putting out his hand to shake that of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman when the Prime Minister told him that he was appointing him President of the Local Government Board, "this will be the most popular appointment in your Cabinet."

A life of King Charles XII of Sweden picked up in the penny box outside a second-hand bookshop in the New Cut when he was an apprentice in an engineering shop laid the foundations of his remarkable library, which finally reached 12,000 books and was sold, after his death, for about £25,000. Half buried in the



sand under an old engine shop in West Africa, where, for a year, he worked as a foreman engineer at Akassa, he found a copy of Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," and, he once told me, he read and re-read it till it fell to pieces. That was the starting-point of his lifelong study of political economy. In the days of his comparative poverty, all his spare money was spent on books. John Burns was the most unrelenting self-disciplinarian I have ever met. He despised all niceties of food, boasted that he was indifferent to the circumstances of his personal environment, and, never wore an overcoat. He swam, rowed, boxed, walked, played billiards, watched cricket, and rarely ate anything after six o'clock at night. Beginning as a mob orator standing on an upturned lemonade box in Battersea Park, he became a powerful speaker. Overhearing a Canadian standing on the Terrace of the House of Commons comparing the Thames with the Ottawa river, Burns tapped the visitor on the shoulder, and said "The Thames is not a river; it is liquid history." So one saying that is immortal must go to his credit. He was often the slave of pompous words and foreign phrases. A Cabinet colleague laughed outright one day when Burns said that another Cabinet colleague was an egotist. Burns rose in his majesty and said, "You laugh because you think I am an egotist, but it isn't egotism with me: (it's joy de vivre" (*joie de vivre*). He got on well with King Edward, who never found a button wrong on Burns's Court clothes, and with the Royal Family generally. Burns told me that he once looked in at the Sunday afternoon men's meeting at Whitefield's in the days of Silvester Horne, and to his surprise saw Lenin (then Vladimir Ilyitch Ulianov) sitting in the audience. On that occasion Lenin doubtless heard some good Radicalism being talked—not the religion which, he said, was the opiate of the people. Lenin was then a revolutionary refugee, reading and writing in the British Museum library, and lodging (as Dr. Hunter) in a dingy house in Holford Square, Pentonville—a house destroyed in the blitz in 1941.

Burns enjoyed being recognized by the man in the street. He told me one day that he once walked from the Lyceum Theatre to Pall Mall with Sir Henry Irving, and "all down the Strand," he said, "I could see the people looking at us, and I could hear

them saying "That's John Burns." Though he despised all titles he was immensely proud of his Privy Councillorship. Passing through the outer Lobby of the House of Commons one day he noticed a policeman whose face he did not recognize. He stopped and spoke to him. "What's your name?" he enquired. "John Burns, sir," said the policeman. "Then there are two of us, John Burnses, in the House, are there? But there's a difference. You are P.C. John Burns and I'm John Burns, P.C."

John Burns and John Morley resigned from the Asquith Government on the eve of the Great War in July 1914. John Morley gave his reasons in a little book: John Burns kept silent about his reasons to the day of his death. He would never say why he left the Cabinet. I asked him once why he did not write an article explaining why he took the step that ended his political career. "No, Porritt," he said, "when I give my reasons for resigning my Cabinet rank I shall do it in the Albert Hall with ten thousand people inside and fifteen thousand outside clamouring to get in." For twenty-five years he was content to be an extinct volcano—or was he content? I am afraid history will reveal that Burns was a conspicuous failure as an administrator. He either allowed himself to be overborne by the higher Civil Servants, or the innate Conservatism in him—a Conservatism which often overtakes voluble Radicals when they attain to high office—made him timid in action. He failed to implement the Town Planning Act, and left Poor Law administration unreformed.

Burns' vanity was so childlike that it disarmed one. When one of Lady Oxford's volumes of Reminiscences was published I glanced through the pages of the review copy that came into my office, and my eye caught a line in which she said that John Burns was one of the best talkers she had ever met. It was Saturday, and I went to lunch at my club taking the book with me. Burns joined me at a small table. I asked him if he had seen Lady Oxford's new book. He said he hadn't. "She is very kind to you," I said, "she says you are one of the best talkers she has ever met." "You're pulling my leg," said Burns, incredulously. I took up the book, looked in the index for the references to Burns, found the one I wanted, and passed the book over to him. He read the passage aloud, slowly, and twice over, "John Burns

is one of the best talkers I have ever met." Then he closed the book, passed it back to me, and gravely remarked, "Well, she is quite right." What could one say? Without a doubt Burns was a good talker, but he liked to do all the talking. What he wanted was an audience. He had a trick of summing men up in a picturesque but unpleasant phrase. On Stanley Baldwin he passed the sententious judgment—"too easy-going to carry responsibility"; on Ramsay MacDonald, "too handsome—spends too much time brushing his hair"; on Neville Chamberlain, "just a glorified Birmingham tram-conductor"; and on C. F. G. Masterman, "a 'eart of gold and a 'ead of feathers." Burns was a Rationalist of the Tom Paine school, but he always said that he knew a real Christian when he met one and respected him. And I heard him say a good word for the missionaries he met when he was an engineer on the West African coast. He might, he said, be doubtful whether they did any good but, anyway, they sacrificed all earthly advantages for the sake of their faith. He was stoical when facing his own troubles. On the day when his wife was buried he went, as usual, to the National Liberal Club for his evening game of billiards.

It was characteristic of John Burns that he should have preserved everything ever written about himself—reports of his own speeches, and anything that any paper said about him. I got tired of urging him to write his autobiography. Once he told me he had begun to write it, and he even showed me some preliminary notes he had made. He was beginning his autobiography about the time of the Roman invasion of Britain and the Roman settlement of Battersea. Evidently it was his intention to devote a volume to the history of London leading up to his own birth in 1858. As far as I know he never got further than those dim beginnings. I often discussed with him what he should do in his will—about his precious Shakespeare folios, his unique collection of books on Sir Thomas More, and his vast library on London. When he died only a thirty-year-old will was discovered after long searchings, and as it left everything to his wife who had died before him that will was invalid. Happily his books on London are not to be scattered. They are to be the possession of London.

It may surprise many people to hear that John Burns—avowed agnostic as he was—figures on the walls of St. Paul's Cathedral. When the mosaics were being designed for the mural decorations of the dome, Burns dropped in casually one morning, and found the designer working on the preliminary cartoons of the disciples of Jesus. He was asked his opinion of them. Burns, never loth to criticize, protested that they made the disciples look too anaemic. The original disciples, he said, were brawny, weather-beaten fishermen, broad-chested men with muscular arms—"men like me," he added. The upshot was that Burns, stripped to his vest, posed as the model for the revised drawings which, in due course, found their place, in mosaic, on the walls of the Cathedral.

I should not be doing justice to John Burns if I did not testify to his probity. He was, indeed, a "sea green incorruptible." His Carnegie legacy of £1,000 a year which made his last years free from financial care had the effect, too, of converting the old aggressive Radical John Burns into a thoughtful, unhasting Liberal. He did not altogether like it when I teased him by saying that Andrew Carnegie had made a *rentier* of John Burns. If character is a credential on the Day of Judgment then I feel sure that Burns is safe.

Far too many people are disposed to say that we have no giants in these days. As one's years creep by one is tempted to be *laudator temporis acti*. Lord Baldwin has wisely said that "things are never what they were, and never have been, and never will be." I get impatient when I hear the House of Commons disparaged and democracy sniffed at, or defined as "government of the people by the rascals for the rich." Fifty years of close observation of the British House of Commons, and diligent reading (in Hansard) of most of the great Parliamentary debates, leave me a thorough-going House of Commons man, and a staunch believer in the democratic system as we have evolved it in Britain. Some changes, due to altering circumstances, may be necessary in the methods of electing members to Parliament, and one hopes that the grip of the party Whips upon private members, which had been increasing since the last war, and had reached a dangerous point under Captain David Margesson when war

broke out again in 1939, will not be restored in post-war years: otherwise the House of Commons may lose its historic prerogative of being an authoritative check upon the Administration, especially in finance, and the constitutional constructive critic of the Government of the day.

In my fifty years' acquaintance with the House of Commons many changes have taken place, but not, I think, for the worse. In my early days it still retained its old reputation as "the best Club in London." Its membership—certainly on the Conservative benches—was predominantly of young aristocrats, the *jeunesse dorée*, fashionably dressed, socially desirable, and only faintly interested in politics. "Whither away?" asked a Piccadilly clubman of an acquaintance. "I'm going down to the House of Commons." "Really. Does that old show still go on?" A change came when economic questions thrust the old political issues aside, and demanded more and more attention from Parliament. Then big business men staked a claim to places on the Conservative benches, and the Labour party sought and secured an ever-increasing Trade Union representation in the House. Economic issues demanded a new type of member, and the House of Commons gradually changed from the old House full of scions of the nobility on one side, and representatives of the commercial and middle classes on the other, to a House in which (as Mr. Lloyd George told Sir Austen Chamberlain in Paris after the 1918 election) the Trade Union Congress faced the Prime Minister and the Federation of British Industries sat behind him. Something has been lost, but the change has not been all loss. I am even prepared to argue that though in the matter of clothes M.P.'s to-day are more unconventional, and are sometimes even slovenly, the standard of manners in debate is distinctly higher than when I first haunted the gallery.

On the whole I think there are fewer cranks and faddists and tilters at windmills in the House of Commons to-day than there were fifty years ago. There are bores still, as there always have been and always will be. And some fools! A minister in the Churchill Government met the assertion that the House of Commons is full of fools by admitting that there were fools in the House. "No doubt there are," he said, "but aren't there

hundreds of fools in the constituencies? and oughtn't the fools to have a fair representation in Parliament, like every other class in the community?" Conceding the presence of a few fools I am prepared to argue that the House never had so many experts in so many branches of scholarship, science, industry, sociology, and agriculture as to-day. Whenever a debate occurs on some highly technical matter it is almost a certainty that some back bench member will rise, and, speaking quite unpretentiously, show an astounding mastery of the subject in all its aspects. Miss Edith Picton-Turberville, who sat in the House as a Labour M.P. from 1929-1935, has said that she had heard better speeches at Y.W.C.A. Conferences, and even at meetings of the Mothers' Union, than many that she heard in the House of Commons. Moreover, she has declared that she actually heard a member make a long rambling speech that he had not even read over when he entered the House, and that when he did enter he did not know what was being debated, and had heard none of the previous speeches. Supplying members with draft speeches to keep the debate going had not been resorted to in my early years.

The two noteworthy changes within my memory are the withdrawal of the Irish members, who had almost reduced the House of Commons to impotence, and the incoming of the women M.P.s, who have made a very definite place for themselves in Parliament. The exchange of the women for the Irish is distinctly an improvement. So far only two women (Miss Margaret Bondfield and Miss Ellen Wilkinson) have sat in a British Cabinet; but about a dozen women M.P.s have held Government Offices and acquitted themselves most creditably. It is a far cry from the days when I first knew the House and when women peeped through a grille in the Ladies' Gallery near the roof, to these days when women M.P.s sit on the front benches, and women can go with (or take) their menfolk into the Strangers' Gallery.

## CONCERNING PRIME MINISTERS

*Mr. Gladstone—Lord Salisbury—Lord Rosebery—Mr. A. J. Balfour—Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman—Mr. H. H. Asquith—Mr. Lloyd George—Mr. Bonar Law—Mr. Ramsay MacDonald—Mr. Stanley Baldwin—Mr. Neville Chamberlain—Mr. Winston Churchill*

LADY OXFORD claimed to have known all the Prime Ministers of the last half century. All I can claim is that I have heard them all speak—most of them on many occasions—met six of them, and known two fairly well. The towering personality of Mr. Gladstone has left the deepest impression on my memory. His eyes fascinated me—"mild and magnificent" at one moment, flashing with fierce moral indignation at another. I can recall the sonorous tones of his voice distinctly: but it is always his eyes that come first to my memory.

Lord Salisbury gave me the impression of immense reserves of strength, and of a supreme disregard of the passing moods of public opinion. This unconcern about public opinion, led, I think, to a general underestimation of Lord Salisbury's greatness as a Foreign Minister, and particularly of his immense service in helping to maintain the peace in Europe. It has been left to M. Elie Halévy to show in the "Epilogue" to his masterly "History of the English People" that Lord Salisbury's chief anxiety as Prime Minister was to keep in check Joseph Chamberlain's incursions into the field of foreign politics, which sometimes endangered peaceful relations with our Continental neighbours. Mr. Chamberlain was allowed to exercise the powers of a co-Premier, and when the Boer War broke out Chamberlain claimed it as "a feather in his cap." After the Boer War (in some measure because of it) came the deluge. It was said of William Cecil, Queen Elizabeth's great minister, and Lord Salisbury's ancestor, and it might be said of Lord Salisbury himself, that he had "great faith in time and very little in heroics," and that "he had an incomparable instinct for the safe central point round which political cyclones can be left to rage

until they blow over." To students of heredity and its vagaries it must be left to explain how it came about that between the sixteenth century William Cecil and the nineteenth century Robert Cecil, the Cecil family produced no outstanding man, and that when Robert Cecil (Lord Salisbury) married (with the disapproval of his father) Miss Georgiana Alderson, the daughter of a Unitarian lawyer and Baron of the Exchequer, they had four sons (Lord Salisbury, Lord Robert Cecil, Lord William Gascoigne Cecil, and Lord Hugh Cecil) who all attained very great distinction, and have served their day and generation splendidly in State and Church alike, and one daughter, Lady Gwendolin Cecil, whose biography of her father revealed a woman of conspicuous literary ability and discriminating historical judgment.

Lord Salisbury, then Lord Cranborne, was a member of the House of Commons in 1868, when his father died, and he succeeded to the title. My friend the late Charles S. Miall used to tell me that he was in the Press Gallery in the Commons one night in April 1868 when Lord Cranborne rose to speak. A few minutes later another journalist came into the Gallery, sat next to Miall, and told him that news had just come of the sudden death of the Marquis of Salisbury, and added that his son, Lord Cranborne, who had not heard of his father's death, had risen to address the House as Lord Cranborne: but would sit down as Marquis of Salisbury, and no longer a member of the House of Commons. Lord Salisbury's recreative hobby was dabbling in chemistry and magnetism. He had a laboratory at Hatfield and in it spent every minute he could spare. I heard, or read, an interesting story concerning this laboratory. When the Gladstone Government fell in 1886, Lord Salisbury received an urgent summons to Windsor to form a Government. The message was taken to him in his laboratory, where he was preparing for an experiment, and was actually just bending a piece of wire to connect two galvanic battery cells. He handed the wire to his laboratory attendant saying, "Put this wire in a safe place until I can go on with this job." Then he hurried away to Windsor, became Prime Minister and remained in office until 1892. The very next morning after relinquishing his Premiership he went



into his laboratory at Hatfield and asked his assistant, "Have you that wire?" It was produced and Lord Salisbury went on with his long-interrupted experiment.

Mention of a galvanic battery cell recalls a story which Sir Austen Chamberlain told of his days at the Admiralty. In one of the examination papers set for naval cadets the question was asked, "What do you know about Daniell's cell?" One bright examinee, evidently floored by the question, gaily replied, "Not very much is known about Daniel's cell, but I assume that it was a cell of ordinary size—say twelve feet by eight. But why should it concern us now, after the long lapse of time? The lions are dead, and Daniel is forgotten. *Sic transit gloria mundi*." Sir Austen added that the cadet passed.

After Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury returned from the Berlin Conference—it was a time when the magic lantern was popular—their portraits were thrown on the screen at a lantern display in a North Country town. Under the portraits were the words, "Peace with Honour." An old lady in the audience asked in a penetrating voice "Which is Peace?" Charles Peace, the notorious burglar-murderer, had just been exciting the public mind.

Lord Rosebery had every gift nature can bestow on a man except stability and fixity of purpose. He "wanted the palm without the dust" and (as Archbishop Davidson said of him) he "was never ready to go out in rough weather." By his petulance and resentment of all criticism he destroyed his own following. As a statesman he left no legacy. His political oratory has no abiding note of inspiration for future generations. Like Mr. Baldwin his occasional deliverances on literary subjects were his best speeches, and from them I would single out his address on Robert Louis Stevenson at Edinburgh. One passage protesting against the idea of erecting a statue to R.L.S. in Edinburgh has always given me delight, all the more so because his sparkling irony about Edinburgh's statues might be directed even more aptly at London's statues. This is the passage:—"It is a great thing that we should be able to walk about Edinburgh and see illustrious names on pedestals and something to commemorate them on these pedestals; but I think you will agree with me, without

any disrespect for some of the sculptors who have executed these statues, that if those restless spirits that possessed the Gadarene swine were to enter into the statues of Edinburgh and if the whole stony and brazen troop were to hurry and hustle and huddle headlong down the steepest place near Edinburgh into the deepest part of the Firth of Forth, art would have sustained no serious loss."

Lord Rosebery is a sad instance of a man attaining all his ambitions too soon and then, blasé with success, sinking into a state of unreasonable despondency, and a misanthropic old age.

Mr. A. J. Balfour had some indefinable charm which his political opponents often found irresistible, even when his subtle elusiveness exasperated them. The House of Commons has seen few such redoubtable debaters. With all his philosophical doubts, he was a devout man, sound in his Theism at all events. When Frank Harris, an overbearing publicist, declared in Mr. Balfour's presence that "Christianity and Journalism were the curses of the age," Mr. Balfour, with cutting irony, quietly said, "Christianity, of course, but why Journalism?" Fastidious to the fingertips as he was, Mr. Balfour must have suffered mental torture when in one of the Manchester elections he was dragged around his constituency on a brewer's dray.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman—with whom I once spent a delightful hour in a tea-tent at a seaside function where no one had been told off to entertain the chief guest—had a captivating bonhomie, but he proved that he also had qualities of firm statesmanship unsuspected until he became Prime Minister. When Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was forming his Cabinet in 1905 a Congregational layman, Sir Joseph Compton-Rickett, then Treasurer of the National Free Church Council, was among the aspirants for ministerial office. He pulled the wires through the Free Church Council Committee, which authorized its Secretary, the Rev. Thomas Law, to wait on Sir Henry and tell him that the inclusion of Sir Joseph Compton-Rickett in his ministry would be gratifying to many Nonconformists. C.B. listened patiently to Mr. Law's plea and then replied that forming a Government was a tremendous responsibility, and while he could make no definite promise of an office for Sir Joseph

Compton-Rickett, he wished the Free Church Council would pray that God might guide him in his selection of ministers. Mr. Law reported C.B.'s communication to the Free Church Council Committee, and prayers were duly offered. But C.B. did not include Sir Joseph Compton-Rickett in his list of Government appointments, and the Free Church Council Committeemen could raise no objection to his omission since any protest would have implied that God had not guided C.B. aright. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was sitting next to Mr. Asquith on the front Government bench one night when a Liberal member, a robust Free Churchman and a fiery Radical made a grandiloquent speech in a vehement tone. Asquith leaned towards C.B. and observed "Platform." "Overflow," snapped back C.B.

Beyond formal introductions and handshakes at Liberal party functions I had no contacts with Mr. Asquith, but I constantly saw him in action in and out of Parliament. Though he did some journalistic work (such as reviewing for "The Spectator") when he was a struggling young barrister, Mr. Asquith had no liking for journalists (excepting Mr. J. A. Spender, Sir Alexander Mackintosh, and Mr. Vaughan Nash) and kept them at arm's length. By this aloofness he lost, I think, more than he realized. Among newspaper men a story was long current that when a group of journalists waited upon him about some urgent question he gave the instruction—"Bring in the representative of 'The Times,' and let the reporters wait." On his fall from office there was, I think, very little sympathy for him among journalists.

Mr. Asquith was a man of deep religious feeling, though he rarely displayed it. Lady Oxford, in one of her books, records that "Henry always came into my dressing-room to say his prayers." When the 1914-18 war had been raging for some months and the outlook seemed black for the Allied armies in France, Sir Stephen Collins—a Congregational M.P.—approached Mr. Asquith in the Lobby and said, "It may be some comfort to you, sir, to know that thousands of Free Church people are praying for you every day." In telling me about this incident, Sir Stephen said that Mr. Asquith was visibly moved, and in a voice husky with emotion replied, "It is indeed a comfort to me, Sir Stephen, to know that godly people are praying for me. I am

carrying a burden too heavy for the shoulders of one man without God's help." By upbringing, Mr. Asquith was a Congregationalist, and as a young man was actively associated with Dr. Henry Allon's Church at Islington. He was one of the signatories to the invitation to Dr. Robert F. Horton—then a Don at Oxford—to be the minister of the newly-formed Congregational Church at Lyndhurst Road, Hampstead. For a time he was regular in attendance at Dr. Horton's ministry. Then he joined the Church of England and very rarely afterwards showed any interest in Congregationalism. Dr. Horton—in an article published in "The Christian World" during my editorship—confessed that he always regarded it as the great failure of his ministerial life that he was not able to hold Mr. Asquith faithful to his Congregational traditions.

As a Parliamentarian, Mr. Asquith seems to me to have had no equal among the Prime Ministers I can remember; though men who saw Gladstone in his great days—which I did not—have assured me that he was Asquith's superior. To be at his best, Asquith required an educated audience, trained to listen to close argument, and sensitive to the value of exact language. He was more commanding in the House than on the platform—though having heard his "We shall not sheathe the sword" speech in the Guildhall when war broke out in 1914, and two of his speeches in the Free Trade campaign when he followed Joseph Chamberlain about the country exposing and exploding the fallacies of his "Tariff Reform" policy, I fully recognize that he was a master of assemblies when occasion required, and a great cause called for defence and vindication. When he died Asquith was said to have been the last of the Romans. I think of him as an Olympian in mind and character.

But if Mr. Asquith had the power to thrill he had also a strange capacity to freeze people. He was especially impatient with intruders on his privacy. Two L.M.S. missionaries in New Guinea, returning from furlough in England, broke their journey at Naples, and were wandering about the Italian city when they recognized Mr. Asquith in the street. Riley said to Rich, "Let us go and speak to him." Rich hesitated, and said it would be an intrusion. "But," said Riley, "he's one of us. If we were at home

we should be among his political followers. Besides, he used, when a boy, to collect money for the 'John Williams' (the L.M.S. missionary ship in the South Seas). I'm going to speak to him." Rich reluctantly acquiesced, and the two missionaries approached Mr. Asquith, and made themselves known. He did not exactly fall on their necks. He said it was a fine day, and that Naples was a beautiful city, and so on. Then he asked them, "Would you like me to give you a bit of advice?" Both missionaries said they certainly would. "Well," said Asquith, "go off back to New Guinea and get on with your work!"

There was something massive and granitic about Asquith. Of all the great speakers I have heard he had the easiest command of concise, exact, and lucid language. There were no loose ends in Mr. Asquith's speeches. His apparently cold exterior, which was apt to chill people, was a protective armour to shield a deep emotional nature. His intimates agreed that in private life he was genial, companionable, and expansive, inspiring affection and returning it. Even his political foes held him in esteem, and some of them showed their affection. Lord Beaverbrook, who broke up Mr. Asquith's Liberal Government in 1915, made Lord Oxford's last days free from monetary anxiety. Lloyd George, who destroyed the first war Coalition Government, had at Churt a study table that once belonged to Mr. Asquith. It was among the effects sold by auction after Lord Oxford's death, and Mr. Lloyd George, anxious, as he told me, to have a memento of his old chief, sent an agent to the sale to buy the table for him.

Mr. Bonar Law mystified me. He always seemed sunk deep in unspeakable gloom. I never saw him smile. I marvelled, however, at his phenomenal memory when I heard him, in the House of Commons, reel off without a note, a vast array of comparative statistics. The Premiership came to him too late. He was a doomed man, and his spell in the highest office was too short to afford any clue to his capacity as a responsible statesman. After Mr. Bonar Law's funeral in Westminster Abbey, Mr. Asquith remarked to a friend, "There, we have laid the Unknown Prime Minister beside the Unknown Warrior."

For nearly thirty years—between 1905 and 1934—I saw nothing of Mr. Lloyd George, with whom I had in earlier years

had some close contacts. Then we were both drawn into a movement which resulted in the formation in 1934 of the Council of Action on war and unemployment. Dr. S. W. Hughes, Secretary of the National Free Church Council, gathered a group of men and women who were deeply concerned over the tragedy of our three millions of unemployed, and the menace of war with Germany. A small conference was summoned to meet at the Memorial Hall, and Mr. Lloyd George was asked, as a Nonconformist, to open the discussion. In a challenging speech he urged the Churches to stop passing resolutions on war, and to take some definite steps to meet the situation that Hitler and Mussolini were creating. Like the then Prime Minister (Mr. Stanley Baldwin), Mr. Lloyd George pinned his faith to collective security and the League of Nations. The upshot of this meeting was the creation of a group of leading Free Churchmen (including Dr. J. D. Jones, Dr. Charles Brown, Dr. Scott Lidgett, Dr. Sidney M. Berry and Mr. Wilson Black) who later brought into the movement Lord Lothian, Lady Snowden, Miss Eleanor Rathbone, Sir Walter Layton, Mr. W. J. Brown, and several Members of Parliament. The Council had no party political basis. It began its work by issuing a manifesto on war and unemployment. At Mr. Lloyd George's request I gathered together all the resolutions on war passed by the denominational Unions and Assemblies, and drawing on all of them made a *précis* of the resolutions. When I passed this on to Mr. Lloyd George he pointed out that the Baptist Union's latest resolution contained some very strong phrases which ought to be incorporated in the manifesto. This was done, and the manifesto was published. I was much amused when my good friend the Rev. M. E. Aubrey, C.H., the Secretary of the Baptist Union, at once leapt into opposition to the Council of Action, and vehemently assailed the manifesto in a long critical article in "The Baptist Times." Mr. Aubrey apparently did not recognize his own handiwork in the section on war, since the Baptist Union resolution had, no doubt, been drafted by him.

At the preliminary meeting of the Council of Action at the Memorial Hall I drew attention to the existence of the World Alliance for promoting International Friendship through the

Churches, pointing out that its thirty national councils scattered all over the world offered the machinery for bringing the influence of the Christian Churches to bear on the war menace. After the meeting Mr. Lloyd George asked me to tell him more about the World Alliance's operations, and suggested that I should meet him about it. I told him that I wanted to see his orchards and farm at Churt, and he invited me to spend the following Saturday with him there—at the same time offering to send his car to convey me from my home in the Surrey Hills to Churt. So it came about that for two years—until my incapacitating accident—I frequently spent Saturday with Mr. Lloyd George at his home. A day with Mr. Lloyd George, talking about apple-growing, preaching, and political personalities, is something to remember. Was there ever a more eager talker or a conversationalist so vivid and lively? My friend C. F. Andrews who, on my suggestion, went to Churt just before sailing on his last visit to India, described talking with Lloyd George as a conversation in a telephone box—every minute tense and vibrant.

Mr. Lloyd George's pride in his farm at Churt was justified. Literally, he bought a wilderness, and converted it into a paradise. He set himself to show that farming in England can be made to pay—given capital enough to use modern machinery, and procure the best scientific advice. I think I am right in saying that Mr. Lloyd George's seven hundred acres employed one man until he acquired the land: when I was visiting Churt regularly he was employing nearly thirty men. He called in Sir Daniel Hall to advise him about the breed of pigs he should buy, and Professor Hutton of the East Malling Experimental Fruit Farm counselled him as to the treatment the light sandy soil at Churt required for growing Cox's Orange and Blenheim Orange apples. Mr. Lloyd George, accustomed to using experts in the field of government, followed their advice. At the end of ten years his apple orchards were yielding a good profit on the capital he had sunk, and his pigs were no less remunerative. The close proximity of Churt to Aldershot enabled Mr. Lloyd George to secure a regular and abundant supply of animal manure for his hungry soil. That was a vital factor in his success at Churt.

Mr. Lloyd George's joy in his farming operations was almost

infectious. I walked with him one Saturday up and down the slopes of his orchards, trying to keep pace with his four miles an hour gait. But the hills were too much for me, though I was ten years his junior, and I had to beg him to have a little mercy on an ageing man. I asked him once how he accounted for his amazing vitality in his seventies. "Because," he replied, "I was stuffed with iodine when I was a boy. It used to be my job on Saturday mornings to go down to the seashore with a handcart, and bring home a load of seaweed. We stacked it up, let it rot, and then used it for manure for our potato patch. We lived mainly on potatoes—mine was a hard childhood, you know—and the iodine in the seaweed got into the potatoes. I'm sure that explains my good health in my old age."

Another day we sat on a mackintosh on a bank near a cross road waiting for my son to come with my car to take us to a new patch of land Mr. Lloyd George was adding to his estate. We waited for ten minutes, but there was no sign of the car. "Something," said Mr. Lloyd George, "has gone wrong with our arrangements." "Alas, how easily things go wrong," I quoted. Mr. Lloyd George said, "That sounds like poetry." "Yes," I said, "don't you know George Macdonald's poem:—

"Alas, how easily things go wrong!  
A sigh too much, or a kiss too long,  
And there follows a mist and a weeping rain,  
And life is never the same again."

"Lovely!" Mr. Lloyd George cried, "I must learn that verse." And while we went on waiting for the car Mr. Lloyd George learned the lines.

His mind constantly flew back to his early days in North Wales, and his memory was charged with recollections of old Welsh preachers and of the *Cymanfaoedd* (or preaching festivals) that were great events in the life of those days. He loved to talk about Welsh preaching and preachers, and to tell of the almost hypnotic effect on their hearers when they fell into the "hwy!" and "broke the wave."

When Mr. Lloyd George in 1940 attained his Jubilee as the Member of Parliament for Caernarvon I wrote congratulating him and claiming to be one of the small and fast diminishing



number of people who remembered his first entry into the House of Commons. I recalled that when he was returned as a Liberal at a memorable by-election Mr. John S. R. Phillips, the editor of "The Manchester Examiner" (on whose London staff I was then engaged) sent a message over the private wire to my brother (Edward Porritt, the London editor) saying that as the new Welsh member was a man who had gained a remarkable hold on North Wales, and who might swiftly make his mark in the House of Commons, it would be wise to keep a watchful eye on him in Parliament. T. W. Russell was then writing the Parliamentary sketch for "The Manchester Examiner," and the message from Mr. Phillips was duly forwarded to him. Mr. Lloyd George was interested to hear this, and said, in a letter to me, "What you say about being on 'The Manchester Examiner' and the instructions you received on my first appearance in the House is very interesting. I should rather like to know what you actually said. If you made any comment at all I have no doubt it was about my physical insignificance, for I was slender, boyish, and—as far as my recollection goes—very shy."

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, whom I knew well, has set a conundrum for historians of the twentieth century. What will they make of this man who, born in obscurity, worked in the fields picking potatoes along with his mother when he was a child of six, and who, largely self-educated, climbed on his merits to such dizzy heights, only to become the prisoner of his former political enemies, and to die, far from home, estranged from old friends, and despised by old political comrades? There were, in fact, two Ramsay MacDonalds—the early "Ramsay," the champion of the dispossessed, ever ready to tilt at privilege and entrenched power, and the later "MacDonald," a proud, intellectual aristocrat, a fastidious man, a connoisseur of art, with superfine literary tastes, and a zest for refined social amenities. It is the earlier Ramsay MacDonald I knew best, and admired most. I was attracted to him by his handsome looks, his glorious voice, his deep sincerity, and his emphasis on spiritual values. Other men were repelled by his vanity, his aloofness towards people he did not like and, sometimes, by his authoritative manner. He was as touchy and temperamental as a prima donna. His personality was a tangled

skein, which calls for much unravelling. I respect his memory because of his courage. When he had become an eminent man, leader of a political party, he built for himself a modest little house at his birthplace, Lossiemouth, where he spent his vacations among humble Scottish fisher folk who called him "Jamie," and who remembered him as a barefooted urchin (born out of wedlock to a farm girl) who played on the sands and went to the village school. It required courage of a very high order to return to his native village, where his history was known to everybody, and where they asked, "Isn't this Mary Ramsay's son?" Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was, I think, the most religious Prime Minister we have had since Mr. Gladstone. M. Maisky, the Russian Ambassador, said MacDonald impressed him with his religious fervour. He was dyed deep in Calvinistic Presbyterianism—a Scot who, while he loved Robert Burns, acknowledged at all times and seasons his everlasting indebtedness to John Knox. When he was leader of the Labour party in opposition he offered to write a series of articles for "The Christian World" on what Scotland owes to John Knox—especially in the field of education. I eagerly accepted the offer, but the articles did not arrive, and after an interval I wrote reminding Mr. MacDonald of his promise. I must have made some reference to the decay of the religious idealism which had animated the Labour party in its early stages. In his reply he said: "If I had the time I would ask you to come and see me and talk over the situation, as I am really disturbed by the weakening of Nonconformist influence in modern movements. You refer to a lack of a steady ethical note in our (Labour) party. But that is just the complaint that so many of our people make about organized religion itself. If we are not very careful, this country, by our lack of alertness, may be handed over to Catholic influences. The measure of disappointment which some of you feel regarding us is, as a matter of fact, the measure of your own failure."

Later in the same year, when "The Christian World" reached its seventy-fifth year of publication, and I was preparing a commemoration number, I asked Mr. MacDonald for a message, and he replied through his secretary that he had countless requests for messages from every quarter, and if he gave special treatment in

one case which he could not grant to the others, he would find himself in difficulties. His secretary added, "It goes very hard with him to have to send a disappointing reply, and to decline a request from you, but he hopes you will realize what his difficulties are, and that you will forgive him accordingly." Nevertheless Mr. MacDonald did send a warm congratulatory message for "The Christian World's" seventy-fifth birthday issue.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's affectionate regard for Dr. John Clifford forged a link with English Nonconformity which was never snapped, though it was strained when he received no invitation to the unveiling of a memorial to Dr. Clifford in Westbourne Park Baptist Church. The omission wounded Mr. MacDonald, who was almost absurdly sensitive to anything which he thought was a personal slight. He, with his wife, had often attended Dr. Clifford's Church, and for years they set apart a small room in their home in Lincoln's Inn Fields where Dr. Clifford could slip in and rest. For a time Mr. MacDonald sulked in his tent and would have no association with the Free Churches. But in April 1934 he attended the centenary celebration of the birth of C. H. Spurgeon in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and paid an eloquent and moving tribute to the great Victorian preacher. But he never recommended a Nonconformist minister for the Companionship of Honour when he was Prime Minister, and when I suggested to him that Dr. Elvet Lewis, the Welsh preacher and poet, was worthy of the honour, he replied rather evasively, and ended by saying: "However, I will think over the matter as sympathetically as I can. These Honours (C. H.) you will remember, were quite new and were initiated by me, and in the nature of the case, they must be rare and special."

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald never wavered in his devotion to the memory of John Knox. Just before he died, a brother Scot, Dr. John Wilson, of Woolwich Tabernacle, said something to him as to the debt that Scotsmen owe to John Knox. Mr. MacDonald expressed his emphatic agreement. "Why, Wilson," he said, "Knox put grit into us all!"

There was a double invasion of England by American Congregationalists in 1930. The International Congregational Council met at Bournemouth, and about the same time a delegation of

over five hundred American Congregationalists also made a pilgrimage to this country. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was asked to be the chief speaker at a banquet at Bournemouth. He refused, and Mr. Lloyd George accepted. Mr. MacDonald was also asked to speak at a Guildhall banquet to the Congregational pilgrims given by the Lord Mayor of London. That invitation he also refused, and Sir John Simon accepted. I took it upon myself to write to Mr. MacDonald expressing my opinion that he was making a mistake in not taking an opportunity to show the American delegations some personal courtesy. He had been in America and had sat with President Hoover on a log beside the Rapidan river discussing Anglo-American questions. He had been royally entertained in America, and American people had taken him to their hearts. In my letter to Mr. MacDonald I suggested to him that it would be unfortunate from the point of view of Anglo-American friendship if the visiting Congregational ministers and prominent laymen went back and let it be widely known in America that he refused to address them. I asked him if he would allow me to bring a party of about twelve of the American visitors to meet him in his private room in the House of Commons. Mr. MacDonald readily agreed to this proposal. I made a very careful choice of the group, which included Dr. W. E. Barton (Lincoln's biographer), Dr. Bradford (a direct descendant of the Bradford who was first Governor of Plymouth, Mass., and one of the Pilgrim Fathers) a Senator from Wisconsin, and Mrs. Charlotte Sharman Brown, a coloured lady educationist and founder of a remarkable negro college at Sedalia, Missouri. I sent Mr. MacDonald a detailed dossier of each member of the party. Mr. MacDonald received the party with great cordiality. He exercised all his charm and, moreover, had evidently studied the dossiers, and in talking to each American visitor in turn it was evident to them that he knew all about them. The visit, timed for a quarter of an hour, lasted forty minutes. All the Americans were in raptures about his courtesy and kindness. The negro educationist, Mrs. Charlotte Sharman Brown, trembling with emotion, asked me afterwards if it was really true, or was she dreaming, that it was the Prime Minister of England who had been talking so graciously to her, a coloured woman. "It couldn't

appen in my own country, you know," she said, with her eyes rimming with tears.

Mr. Stanley Baldwin won my admiration as a fine English gentleman, and I felt a sincere respect for him as an industrialist when, after the Great War, he almost surreptitiously paid into the Exchequer all the war-profits his firm had made by contracts for the Government. It was a noble gesture. But as a politician I felt that Mr. Baldwin had no resolution. As Prime Minister he seemed to throw the reins on the horse's back. He let his ministers go their own way. I heard one Cabinet minister say that he had not taken up an hour of the Prime Minister's time in a year. My reaction was that the Prime Minister deserved no credit for that.

I met Mr. Baldwin once, when a deputation of leaders of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches waited upon him to present a series of resolutions on the question of Reparations passed by an International Conference at Zürich. Mr. Baldwin was gracious and sympathetic, and expressed his satisfaction that religious leaders were seriously thinking about the complex problems which might lead to another great war. Later, with Lord Dickinson, I spent a few minutes with Mr. Baldwin discussing what statement should be issued to the press about the deputation's visit and his response. He was charming at close quarters but in the end he vetoed any idea of a *communiqué* to the press. I often felt that Mr. Baldwin's political speeches missed fire. But when he spoke of country life, of Worcestershire lore, or of books, I sat at his feet, captivated by a gracious mind. I could quite understand what his cousin, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, meant when he said of Mr. Baldwin, "My cousin, Stanley, is the literary man of our family."

Mr. Neville Chamberlain, whom I never met, though I heard him speak on many occasions, always chilled me. He was icy, and utterly devoid of any spark of personal magnetism. Lord Snell said that Mr. Neville Chamberlain gave him the impression that he had been "weaned on a pickle." He seemed to me, also, to have inherited his father's supreme contempt for his political opponents. There were occasions when I thought he passed all endurable limits of offensiveness in his retorts to front bench Labour members across the table. I was told that it was this

unfortunate discourtesy that led the Labour party leaders to refuse flatly to go into a Coalition Government led by Mr. Chamberlain. His selections of men for ministerial offices were appalling. When he appointed Mr. Leslie Burgin to the Ministry of Supply a wit at the Incorporated Law Society said it was because Mr. Burgin was the only man who could say "yes" to the Prime Minister in seven different languages. A drab man himself, Mr. Neville Chamberlain evidently liked a drab entourage. But I felt the infinite pathos of his last despairing *cri du coeur* to his friends—"For I still have friends in this House"—to save him from defeat after the retreat from Norway—the occasion when Mr. L. S. Amery rose in the House and said, "For God's sake, go." I saw Mr. Chamberlain only once after his fall. He looked gaunt and listless—a broken man.

Whether Mr. Neville Chamberlain was a man with Prime Ministerial stuff in him may be questioned: that he strove to serve his country cannot, I think, be doubted. He hated the very thought of war, and to preserve the peace carried his "appeasement" policy to the point of national and personal humiliation. Lord Vansittart, whom he dismissed and demoted into impotence, says that his confidence exceeded his knowledge. That may be the judgment of history. He made many arid speeches in his time, but he made one speech, which I heard and shall never forget—the speech on the Maternity Bill, when he told how his own mother had died in childbirth, and said it was the dearest desire of his heart to save other mothers from that tragedy. As Minister of Health Mr. Chamberlain pioneered boldly, and the whole nation owes him a debt of gratitude for his work in that department. He ought not to lie in his grave at Westminster Abbey unwept, unhonoured, and unsung. But it is the way of the world, alas, to cry "Hosanna!" on Sunday, and "Crucify him!" on Friday.

When attending meetings about forty years ago, I frequently encountered at the press table a tall distinguished-looking man, with the stamp of the public school boy all over him—he was an Old Millhillian—who was always known as "The Representative of 'The Times.'" He so designated himself on his visiting cards. Mr. Brain—I cannot recall his initials—was often sent by "The

Times" to make inquiries that required tact and good manners. He told me that when Lord Randolph Churchill died, in January 1895, he was sent by "The Times" to get from Lady Randolph Churchill some particulars about the funeral arrangements. A friend accompanied him, but stayed outside to stroll about while Mr. Brain was indoors. A very boyish looking young man came out of the house and asked Mr. Brain's friend to come indoors, as it was a cold night, and Lady Randolph did not like him to wait outside. He was shown into a room, and given a magazine to while away the waiting time. Soon the youth came back and asked him whether he would like to see Lord Randolph lying in his coffin. He replied that he would, and he was taken into a room where Lord Randolph lay. Standing beside the coffin the youth said that Lord Randolph Churchill would be disappointed that he was not to be buried in Westminster Abbey. He always told Lady Randolph that, when he died, Mr. Gladstone would write her a beautiful letter, and offer him burial in the Abbey. But Mr. Gladstone was not Prime Minister, and so Lord Randolph was to be buried at Blenheim. But, the boy continued, "A Churchill *will* be buried in the Abbey. I shall be buried in Westminster Abbey." The boyish looking youth was Winston Churchill.

It has not been my good fortune to have any personal contacts with Mr. Winston Churchill. The only time when I have ever shaken hands with him was in 1907, when he opened the "Orient in London," a great Missionary Exhibition in the Agricultural Hall. Mr. Churchill was then Under-Secretary for the Colonies in the Campbell-Bannerman Government, and he had just paid a visit to Uganda and seen something of the progress made in that colony, largely due to the work of the missionaries there. When first asked to open the Exhibition he declined. I think the approach had been clumsily made. Mr. H. W. Massingham, then editing "The Nation," and a very influential figure in Liberal political circles, was asked if he could not induce Mr. Churchill to change his mind and undertake the opening ceremony. Massingham, though he had no personal interest in religious activities, readily agreed to try. He represented to Mr. Churchill that he was throwing away an opportunity to win the

goodwill of the Nonconformist element in the Liberal party—at that time an important factor. The outcome was that Mr. Churchill was approached once more by the Exhibition Committee—I think Sir Albert Spicer was the intermediary—and this time he acquiesced. I recall how gracious he was to everyone at the opening ceremony, and I have a very clear recollection of his eloquent and moving speech, warm with admiration for the self-sacrificing work of the missionaries he had met in Uganda. One phrase he used then about social conditions at home has stuck in my memory. “No one,” he said, “ought to have everything until everybody has something.” He was very radical in those days. It was about this time, when the House of Lords was amending the Licensing Bill out of all recognition, that Mr. Churchill, with tears in his voice, protested that the action of the Lords was “breaking the hearts of all the Bands of Hope in the country.” From the gallery of the House of Commons I heard Mr. Churchill introduce the Budget embodying a tax on betting. That, and his precipitate return to the gold standard, were two of his blunders. This was the Budget speech enlivened by Mr. Churchill pausing at the point where he turned from national expenditure to deal with his new taxation, and convulsing the House by saying, “And now I will fortify the Revenue,” as he took a long drink from the glass of something that did not look like water.

When I heard Lord Randolph Churchill make a couple of speeches over fifty years ago, I was impressed by his almost magical use of words—and the same gift now impresses me in the greater son. Lord Randolph Churchill has also transmitted to his son his phenomenal memory. When Mr. Winston Churchill was on a visit to Lord Aberdeen in Scotland the conversation in the drawing room one day turned on the subject of memory. Lord Aberdeen cited Lord Randolph’s memory as very remarkable. “Lord Randolph,” said Lord Aberdeen, “could read a leading article in ‘The Times’ twice, and then repeat it.” Mr. Winston Churchill thought that he could do the same. A copy of “The Times” was sent for. Mr. Winston Churchill asked Lord Aberdeen to read the leading article aloud: then he read it over himself, and at once reproduced the article from memory. Lord



Aberdeen, who checked the repetition with "The Times" before him, declared that Mr. Churchill had scarcely made a verbal slip in the whole recital. When Mr. Winston Churchill was born his grandmother, the Duchess of Marlborough, said that he came into the world "making an earth-shaking noise." One might say that he has been doing that ever since.

## CHAPTER XIV

### SIR WILFRED GRENFELL

*A Radiant Personality—Sympathy with Labour—Views—On Pacifism—  
An incident in a train—Some Grenfell letters*

THE biographer of Sir Wilfred Grenfell of Labrador will have to describe a real saint. Grenfell wrote his autobiography, and gave the facts about his great medical missionary enterprise among the lone fisher folk on the inhospitable Labrador coast; but he did not give—he could not give—any impression of the sheer radiance of his own personality, or of the uncanny power he possessed of inspiring men and women to give themselves to unselfish service of their fellow creatures. There was an irresistible magnetism about Grenfell. Evelyn Underhill would certainly have said of him—as she said of another man—that “he was a nice open-airy man, with the proper Christian twinkle in his eye.” He was not a good speaker, but something in his personality held audiences spell-bound when he spoke. He was at once the worst and the most popular lecturer of his time: but though he was discursive, and sometimes irrelevant, he fascinated his hearers, who forgot to be critical. To no missionary since David Livingstone has the heart of the British people gone out as it did to Wilfred Grenfell.

It was my delight to enjoy an intimate friendship with Wilfred Grenfell for well over thirty years. We met when Grenfell was “Dr. Grenfell of the Deep Sea Fishermen’s Mission.” He was home from Labrador on a summer visit, and I sought an interview with him for “The Christian World.” What I expected would be a half hour’s conversation at the Russell Hotel extended over two hours and a half. We parted with an understanding that I was to bring him and Silvester Horne together over lunch at the National Liberal Club. Horne and Grenfell were friends at once. They were adventurers both, starting out on new lines of Christian enterprise, and both a little weary of stuffy saints and conventional Christianity. After that first meeting Grenfell

and I kept our friendship in repair by corresponding when he was away in Labrador, and by frequent meetings and meals together whenever he was in England. Grenfell—who belonged to a Liberal branch of his famous family of bankers, soldiers, and administrators—was intensely interested in the British Labour party and its leaders. In them he saw, he said, the machine for applying the spirit and principles of Jesus to political and social problems. At his request I introduced him to Ramsay MacDonald, Arthur Henderson, Ben Spoor, and one or two other Labour party leaders, and almost his first question to me whenever he came to England was whether the Labour party was maintaining its high idealism. When the first Labour Government came into Office Grenfell wrote to me from his home at Brookline, Mass.:—"My thoughts have turned to you as I read the accounts of the new Labour Government. How thrilled you must be! . . .

"Mrs. Grenfell and I have been persuaded to take a Sabbatical year. My directors almost compelled me to, and I think of going round the world with her. We want change of scene and thought, and yet personally I hate the idea of losing a day on mere sight-seeing when life is so brief. You know my ideas on how best to extend the Kingdom of God on earth.

" . . . Now I thought I would write you a line on this, because you are a man who knows much of the world and its ways and I am an aged shellback, practically limited in my experience to those who 'go down to the sea in ships.' I want to visit India. I want especially to see out-of-the-way parts—the Labradors of India, and I wondered how to set about that. I suppose the London Missionary Society would give me an introduction to their most interesting stations? I want to see . . . any missionary effort that is really translating the message of God's love into terms that convince and then transform the people. What would you do?"

As I was a director of the London Missionary Society, I easily arranged for Grenfell to be welcomed at all the Society's stations in India that he might wish to visit.

In another letter Grenfell set out his views on Pacifism. He wrote: "I want to thank you so much for introducing me to

Orchard [Dr. W. E. Orchard, then of the King's Weigh House Chapel]. He certainly is a very fine man and a very fascinating man. . . . I am no nearer agreement with Orchard on the Pacifist question. I cannot see beyond the instinct to resist oppression. . . . It is a time when it is folly to be wise. It seems to me a supreme sacrifice to take human life—to a thinking man it is a higher sacrifice than giving life away, and I think largely so because I cannot see how one could escape being hardened. But still I saw Christ at the butt end (of the rifle) and see him there now from 1914-1918."

Monetary considerations never weighed with Grenfell, but as life advanced he was compelled to give thought to provision for his old age. I had asked him to write me an article—one of a series I was planning for "The Christian World." He replied: "I shall be glad to do what you ask, but I am already deep in promises and you ask me for a serious commitment. When will it appear, and what do you propose to pay for it? What a sordid question! But as you know I do work to the limit for Labrador, and my days are getting shorter. I realize that, so I am compelled to consider the money question at my age, as I never did of old. Your friendship and help, so long and so generously extended, make me promise honestly to do this for you.

"My many visits to so many titled folk, statesmen, teachers, boys, Universities, schools, and civil authorities and labouring people have opened my mind a bit and also, above that, really touched one's heart. I love dear old England and I am a confirmed optimist, whatever the trend of events seems to indicate."

My carelessness about preserving correspondence causes a hiatus of several years in my file of Grenfell letters. A letter from Lady Grenfell (dated April 3, 1936) written for Grenfell, "who has been distinctly seedy most of this winter, and is now in bed for the second time," expressed their great anxiety for my recovery after the motor-car accident which cut short my career as a journalist. Meanwhile Grenfell's own health was becoming seriously impaired. When he was in England in 1935, a Harley Street specialist diagnosed *angina pectoris*, but Grenfell himself would not admit that his heart was affected. I went with him to Churt that autumn to spend a day with Mr. Lloyd George. On

a previous visit, I had introduced the elder statesman to the great missionary, and they had quickly found common bonds of sympathy. On that occasion Mr. Lloyd George had promised Grenfell a pedigree boar and sow to start a herd of pigs in Labrador.

My reference to our first journey together to Churt recalls an episode in the train. I was just back from Geneva, and Grenfell was eager to know what I thought and felt about the League of Nations and its work. A lady travelling in the same compartment intervened in our conversation—with a graceful apology. She said she could not help overhearing what we were saying, and she was genuinely interested to hear someone who had been in Geneva and knew what the League was doing say that he really believed in it, as the daily paper she read and many of her friends had nothing but contempt to pour upon the League. Our conversation then turned to Labrador, and Grenfell was expressing his pride in his successful introduction of English green vegetables into a country where the people had always had a limited range of diet, mostly fish, and needed the vitamin content of fresh vegetables. The lady, who had been quietly reading in her corner, now gathered who Grenfell was. "You are not Sir Wilfred Grenfell of Labrador?" she asked. Grenfell modestly replied in the affirmative. "Oh, Sir Wilfred," she said, "I can't tell you how overjoyed I am to meet you. You have been my hero for many years. At one time I made up my mind to volunteer for work under you in Labrador, and spend the rest of my life doing what work you could have given me to do. But family matters upset my plan, to my great disappointment." Grenfell, who hated being lionized, and above everything always scorned any suggestion that there was anything heroic in his life-work, was plainly embarrassed and, I think, relieved when the train drew up at Guildford station, where a car was waiting to take us to Churt.

A postcard from Grenfell after our second visit together to Churt thanked me for the loan of Lloyd George's "War Memoirs," and added, "What a *brain* that man has! The American Ambassador (with whom we were dining) Lord Astor, and Harold MacMillan, surprised me by backing up Lloyd George's

criticisms of Haig." The next letter from Grenfell that I have kept brought bad news. His health was worse; he wrote: "This may be good-bye. After three score and ten odd years, the physical apparatus relating me to most of my active work made it only wise to hand the helm to others. . . . So long as we recognize it, and answer even a challenge to the venture 'of retirement' as we ventured the 'challenge to advance,' we must still expect to have our difficulties as before—even *usque ad mortem*. The Cross is symbolic of Christ's leadership."

Grenfell, compelled by ill-health to relinquish his work in Labrador, found retirement irksome, and fretted over his enforced inactivity. A letter from his Vermont home reveals this mood. "Everyone hates to be told they must take a back seat, even when three score years and ten have passed, and I don't like it any better than anyone else, and as far as consecutive writing, lecturing, and leadership goes I am in the same box (I expect) as yourself. But there are plenty of things I still can do, and so I manage to keep smiling. As you know I made up my mind that the only way to make this planet worth living on was to follow the Christ whether we understood His relationship to God or not. What He asked us to do was to follow Him, not to understand Him anyway, and men increasingly read what we do rather than what we think."

Another letter from Grenfell—which unfortunately I have not kept—showed him once again depressed by being on the shelf, and a mere spectator of life. I replied in a letter mingling a mild admonishment for his depression with an urgent appeal to him to lift up his heart. It was, I told him, rather unworthy of him to repine at his enforced activity after such a long life of active beneficent service; that his work in Labrador was going on, and would go on, under the direction of men he had schooled to take up the responsibility; that he had been an inspirer of youth on both sides of the Atlantic, and that he was one of the "choir invisible" who "live again in minds made better by their presence." The return mail brought me a letter in reply from Lady Grenfell, who wrote: "Your letter to Sir Wilfred has given him the greatest comfort and pleasure. I know he will be writing to you personally just as soon as he is able;

but I could not resist the temptation to tell you that what piece of work you might have accomplished by the time thought which it took you to send that letter could not have given more help and encouragement than it did. It was awfully nice of you to think of doing it, and it has really given Wilfred a lift up, which, poor dear, he sorely needed. . . hope you are getting stronger every day and I want to assure you of our continued friendship, affection, and admiration."

Grenfell's own acknowledgment of what he called "my optimistic letter" came in due course. It is dated September 1937, and after sadly saying "I see England is arming at great speed," and expressing his belief that "America will stand always with England but will certainly avoid war if possible," he continued: "I was given the other day Lord Rutherford's book 'The Newer Alchemy.' I find it difficult to follow now, but the argument is unanswerable, and its meaning very helpful to feel. Material mass and material energy do mutate slowly, and we, who are already in a new world of mechanical energy applied to almost every line of life (especially here in America) feel that our faith was fully justified. We have lived to see a still newer world in which is open a still newer faith, bred of knowledge. . . . The fact of dictatorships and democracies co-existing will continue till greed and selfishness are replaced by all that Christ stood for. . . . A Divine Spirit of Love—such as Jesus claimed—is being far more accepted, without mental reservations, and more universally actuates those who once claimed intellectual infallibility than ever before. Fewer question the unconventional, straight, honest preachers of the simple faith that you and I staked our all on, and certainly more hear and listen to them even if only in the shelter of the home (by radio) than ever in my day. And more men, and heads of large industries, certainly are putting Christ's methods into practice for their customers, their workpeople, and themselves, than I would have thought possible when Bellamy wrote 'Looking Backward.'"

While Sir Wilfred was becoming more and more frequently subject to attacks of *angina pectoris*, Lady Grenfell fell a victim to the insidious and incurable disease from which she died, leaving Grenfell a sad and lonely man for his remaining days. I had

more letter from him written at St. Simon's Island, Georgia, reporting that he was "a good deal better, but not yet all I would like to be." He said, "I am an optimist, and that is the way I am going to end. The Kingdom of Christ is coming, I am sure. The very fact that the 'world is in an uproar' is only to be expected, until that time comes when man loves his brother as himself, and I know of no other agency for that but Christianity. . . . If it does not become a world of brotherhood under the Fatherhood of God, I see no other use for it to carry on at all."

On a card formally acknowledging a consolatory letter I wrote on the death of Lady Grenfell, he wrote: "Please forgive my writing more. I am sending up a prayer for you and your wife. I hope to return for a visit to Labrador, and possibly home to England, if there is no war this winter. You have been a very generous and real helper to this work. Anything I can do, please let me know." That was Grenfell's last message to me. He soon followed his wife to the grave. So there passed away a simple unassuming man whose rôle in life, he said, was that of "a very ordinary surgeon" working "largely among seafaring people," a man of God who said his "idea of serving Christ was to take a cup of milk to a sick child on the Labrador," a man who was a staunch friend and a delightful companion, and a man who loved all humanity. Our long friendship is a blessed memory to me. I should be quite content to have as my own epitaph "He was a friend of Wilfred Grenfell."



## CHAPTER XV

### DR. JAMES MOFFATT

*An animated conversation—A versatile Professor—His translation of the Bible—"Everyman's Life of Jesus"—Cricket fan—A sparkling letter-writer—Some of his letters—The decay of Bible Reading and its consequences*

I ALWAYS associate my first meeting with Dr. James Moffatt (whose translation of the Bible into Modern English has spread his name and fame all over the world) with the most animated bout of conversation that I can remember. Dr. Moffatt and I were invited by Sir Henry Lunn to the second of his Reunion Conferences at Mürren, in the late summer of 1924. We met—introduced by the late Arthur Hird—on the platform at Victoria station, where we were joined by two other guests of Sir Henry Lunn—Professor George S. Duncan, who was Sir Douglas Haig's favourite Chaplain at G.H.Q. in the 1914-18 war, and is now Dean of the St. Mary's Divinity College at the University of St. Andrews, and Mr. W. M. R. Pringle, a Liberal M.P. who had made a great reputation as a *franc-tireur* in Parliamentary debates. At Calais we secured a compartment for four in a through coach for Lauterbrunnen. As soon as the train started we realized that we had no prospect of getting any sleep on that night journey. A "flat" on the wheel underneath our compartment caused a monotonous clicking with each revolution of the wheel, which murdered all hopes of sleep by its maddening insistence. So we talked, and I think I started the line of conversation by quoting the old tag that some book that had been mentioned was "the sort of book that once you put it down you can never take it up again." The conversation turned upon books that we never wanted to read again. Though I was a solitary defenceless Englishman facing three formidable Scots I had the temerity to say that I included all Sir Walter Scott's novels among the books I never wanted to read again. Then the heavens—or at least three Scots—fell upon me. Again, when Dickens was mentioned I confessed that I found the reading of his books, excepting "Pickwick Papers" and "David Copper-

field," a wearisome ordeal. I was once more in a miserable minority of one. For several hours we went at it hammer and tongs, ranging over literature to find books that we certainly did not want to re-read, even if we ever had the leisure to do so. The talk went on, brisk and vital, until we found ourselves at Lauterbrunnen. I shall never forget that night journey. It launched Dr. Moffatt and myself on a lasting friendship, which deepened until his death in June 1944. To me our friendship was an enrichment of my life.

Dr. Moffatt's versatility often staggered me. His learning was prodigious. It was said of him, as was said of Robertson Smith, that he might have filled with distinction any chair, except that of science, in any University. With all his learning (Dr. McGregor called him a polymath), he was wholly free from pedantry. He did not even look like a professor. Tall, erect, looking twenty years less than his age (he was born in July, 1870), with friendly eyes peering, with just a suggestion of wonderment, through big spectacles, he might have been a Harley Street specialist, a bank manager, a consulting engineer, a solicitor in good practice, or an amateur fast bowler in a first class cricket eleven—anything in fact but what he was, a Professor of Church History and one of the foremost New Testament scholars of his time. I ought to add that I never found a book that I had read and he had not, or told him a story that he did not know. He carried his learning lightly and was the most unassuming of men.

The original idea of a new translation of the Bible into modern English, which Dr. Moffatt carried into effect with such conspicuous success, came out of the fertile brain of Robertson Nicoll, who suggested to the theological students of Glasgow Free Church College that each student should make himself responsible for translating a single book of the Bible. When all the other students one by one gave up the task, Moffatt went on to do the work single-handed. The New Testament was completed in 1913. The Old Testament followed twelve years later. There are still people who imagine that Moffatt entertained the silly notion that his modern version would supplant the Authorized Version. Nothing was farther from his thoughts

than to challenge the rhythm and diction of that classic translation. He had set himself to produce a version of the Bible which would in some degree represent the gains of recent lexical research, and one that would also prove readable, especially to people who neglect the Bible. The translation of the Old Testament was designed to offer the unlearned a transcript of the Old Testament literature in the light thrown upon it by modern research. He set himself to make a fresh translation as exact and idiomatic as is possible, in view of the problems with which the Hebrew text abounds, and a version in effective and intelligible English. Moffatt expected criticism, and it came. But the prejudice has died down now, and preachers, at all events, find his rendering of their texts a very present help in time of trouble!

Moffatt's immense literary output bore testimony alike to his versatility and his assiduity. Apart from numerous Biblical commentaries and historical studies in the New Testament, he published a primer of the novels of George Meredith, and even tried his hand on a detective story. Sometimes I am disposed to think that his smallest book is his biggest—his "Everyman's Life of Jesus," which I always keep within reach on my bookshelves. Using his own version of the New Testament text, Moffatt traces the outlines of the life story of Jesus behind the different Gospel traditions, and sets out the events in something like chronological order, prefacing each section with an introductory note embodying the gist of what modern critical scholarship has to say about the record. Thus he fixes the date of the birth of Jesus in the year 7 B.C., and places the Crucifixion in the year 30 A.D. The historical background is filled in, and all the events and episodes in the life of Jesus are deftly woven into a swiftly moving narrative. The book is a little masterpiece.

Though Moffatt never mentioned it to me I believe I am right in saying that early in his career he took upon his shoulders heavy financial obligations which, in strict legality, were no concern of his own, and—like Sir Walter Scott and Mark Twain—he scorned delights and lived laborious days until the debts were paid off.

On our journey to Mürren we changed at Lauterbrunnen into

the mountain railway that climbs the steep Alpine slope up to Mürren. It was Moffatt's first trip on a funicular railway, and the novel experience rather unnerved him. He could not bear to look out on that steep ascent, and vowed he would never repeat the experience. "I'm like the Highland farmer," he told me, "who said of another farmer, 'He sings "I to the hills will lift mine eyes," but devil a foot will he put on them.'"

Moffatt's interests were comprehensive. He thought that the greatest thrill in life is to hook a salmon, but, in the absence of a salmon river, he got authentic thrills out of watching ice-hockey. I look back on many happy days spent with him at Lord's and the Oval. In his admiration of Hammond he claimed to be a Gloucester man in the world of cricket, though I saw him quite ecstatic when watching big Jim Smith make sixers for Middlesex at Lord's. When in New York he always kept a close watch on English County Cricket scores and championship tables: when in England he had newspaper cuttings sent to him from New York so that he could keep *au fait* with baseball. Golf was his own favourite game, but Rugby football (as a spectator) had no more enthusiastic fan. Sufficient of a pianist to keep a party going with College choruses (his accompaniment of "Polly-Wolly-Doodle all the day," I am told, was a joy for ever) he was devoted to Bach and Beethoven, and the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, which I believe he knew by heart.

Moffatt's personal letters always sparkled. I have preserved, and still treasure, more letters from him than any other friend. They are grave and gay in turn, lit up with many a good story, always reflecting the depth of affection which he had for his friends. In a phrase of John Watson's they reveal the warm heart of the cold North. Here are a few excerpts from Moffatt's letters to me. After congratulating me on my appointment to the editorship of "The Christian World," he goes on: "I'm off to America and Canada at the end of next month, lecturing and preaching. It will be rather an exhausting tour, as they have arranged for me to hold forth even in Los Angeles (not on the Movies). However, I like the Americans. They are the most generous of people, and their love of lectures is a perpetual marvel to me. The older I grow the less I like lecturing, or

eing lectured to. Luckily tastes vary! Hodder and Stoughton sent me a set of press cuttings about my Old Testament translation, and dozens drift in from America. My masters! this is a queer green world. And yet a grateful one, isn't it? The letters get make me squirm, and blush like a tomato, so generous are they. It's the journalists (forgive me) who amuse me, at least some of them. But I needn't enlarge on this to you, who know the inside of things far better than I do."

A letter dated July 1932, says: "Since we parted I have been up and down Scotland, preaching the Gospel, visiting friends, and catching trout from Stirling to Forfarshire, from Glasgow to this outpost of civilization (Oban). But I have not forgotten your heaped-up kindnesses in London. . . . One of my daughter's pupils in general history told her in an examination paper the other day that 'the English, during the reign of George II, lived in burrows, and some of them were rotten burrows.' That may be so, but London is no rotten burrow so long as cricket-lovers like you exist. Now up here, it's yachts not cricket. I look out from this window at which I write to see steam yachts and sailing boats, and even hydroplanes—all at anchor, of course, for this is the Sabbath day, and even godless English tourists haven't quite thawed the Highland Sabbath traditions. You may pass mills in London, but Christians and yachts don't work here on Sunday."

A year later, a letter from New York begins: "An Indian summer of warmth has come our way. College opened to-day. I had to sit in academic robes of honour and heaviness till my flesh and blood nearly fainted, forbye an introductory oration. It was given by one of my colleagues, and now I'm a wilted flower, maybe like some in your garden at this hour.

"Well, I heard something of you from that daughter of mine who came out in the beginning of August to join us in a West Indies Cruise. We did have an idyllic time. Missed some young hurricanes, one of which battered the 'Mauretania' just behind us. Found Scots everywhere (Yes, sir!) and slept for the first time at Demerara under mosquito nets (alas, to no purpose). So six weeks passed. I was tired when I got on board, tired out with work, lecturing and preaching in the States, so tired that I

simply read novels, and smoked, and slept, and generally relaxed. Well, I did read some serious things, and, also, (from the ship's library), some modern biographies, including Lord Curzon's, which, soberly and deliberately, I should judge the worst modern biography I have struck.

"I've been saddened by the death of an old college chum, Dr. Donald Fraser. He and I foregathered about forty years ago, or more, in Glasgow. A thoroughly sound natural Christian with lots of faith and fun in him, and never spoilt by the religious world. One could not have wished the cause of missions better represented than in Donald: he could be intense without being narrow or self-conscious. When one of your original circle dies, how you feel it! No one can ever take the place of such—the people to whom, when you meet them, you can say 'Do you remember?' However I must not close on this note. We are left, you and I, to carry on when others are taken."

In two letters dated February 1934, Dr. Moffatt writes: "And so you are a grandfather! Well, I cannot enter into your emotions, though I am glad you are glad at your promotion. My wife has a great desire to be a grandmother—I tease her about it—but there's no immediate prospect of her attaining this rank. . . .

"We're in bitter cold weather here, but it is bright: the sun shines. Went for the first time to see an ice-hockey match the other night: quite the fastest game I've ever seen. To see these French Canadians skate was a wonder and a delight, especially to one who never quite mastered the outside edge. . . . Whew! but it's cold—several degrees below zero. This is the hardest winter we've struck since we landed. . . .

"I must tell you that the other night I had to go to a big Methodist Church in Brooklyn to address a group on 'Worship in the Early Church.' The night's programme was: Supper at 6.0; Prayer Meeting, 7.0-8.0; Groups for Bible Study, 8.0-9.0;—one of which I addressed as seriously and devoutly as I could, only to find, mark you, they were all to meet at 9.0 in the large hall for the climax of the evening—an exhibition of performing dogs! I've never had the honour of preparing an audience for that sort of thing ere now."

A description of his tour round the world during his sabbatic year in 1934, came to me on his return to New York. "I was in ten ships, each comfortable and speedy. My wife stood the strain well, enjoyed herself thoroughly, and was fêted nobly. We have good reason to be thankful for journeying mercies, and I hope we are. . . .

" . . . . In Australia and New Zealand I found myself lugged into unexpected work. The folk would take no denial. I had to preach and talk incessantly. Ten days in Australia—my diary shows three sermons and fourteen addresses, some broadcasting, with public and private entertainment. Met many an old friend from Scotland too. . . . They worked me hard there, and in New Zealand where I was so busy that I never got an hour for trout fishing. Alas! Alas! Presbyterians commandeered me. Cities gave me municipal receptions. Yes, sir! Mayors and Councils publicly welcomed this wandering Scot. We lunched at Government House, with Lord Bledisloe. I had a sort of Mission to the Maories, preaching to them through an interpreter. Twenty-three days in New Zealand—five devoted to a motor-trip through superb scenery—and my diary tells the tale: nine sermons and twenty-five addresses, several broadcasts again, besides social functions when we had to get up and 'say a few words.' I tell you, it was time to get away, for I was in danger of thinking myself a person of importance, and my voice began to give way under the strain. A week at Honolulu: Christmas week. Splendid weather. Got away with only two sermons and one lecture. So to Vancouver, where we were to spend a few days quietly with friends: but newspaper reporters got wind of us, and the University demanded a lecture: so did the Anglican College. Thence over the Rockies to Montreal—held up for 24 hours by a snowdrift. All went well, however: the train was warmed and food was abundant. Now we are back in this village. . . . I expect you to agree that the holiday hasn't been wholly idle."

In a letter from New York dated July 4, 1934, Moffatt writes: "This is my sixty-fifth birthday, and though I suppose I can still claim to be a junior to you in years, this milestone makes me feel a senior rather uncomfortably. So that's that. All day long fire-

works have been dinning one's ears, set off by children to celebrate this day (Independence Day) of freedom from the 'Brutal British.' My only refuge has been in our library at College, where silence reigned, and I got some work done. It's dreadfully hot out of doors, and even indoors one sits in one's shirt sleeves.

"Since College closed at the end of May I've been busy. First at a Methodist Conference down in North Carolina where for a fortnight I taught parsons or Pastors (as they call themselves) how to preach from the Book of Psalms, and how to understand the first half of the Book of Acts. I go to this gathering every two years. They are most friendly and hospitable. Just to even up my ecclesiastical bearings I spoke at an adjacent Baptist Conference one evening in the open air, and preached in the Presbyterian Kirk on the Sunday. Don't tell me I'm not an undenominationalist. Better that than a 'Nationalist' anyhow. Besides, what did I do next? Went to Albany for a week to an Episcopal group, and lectured to the clergy (if you please) on preaching. Never lectured on preaching before: but it turned out happily. We had a group of over forty men, and I was quite at home with them.

"Now our own Summer School begins here (Union Theological Seminary, New York) when I lecture for six weeks on Church History, and give five special addresses on 'Devotional Classics.' You won't guess the five I've chosen. To be varied I selected: (a) The Heidelberg Catechism, (b) Francis de Sales on 'The Love of God,' (c) Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress,' (d) Law's 'Christian Perfection,' and (e) Martineau's 'Endeavours after the Christian Life.' The last has always been one of my favourite books, and I don't suppose that one of my audience will ever have heard of it. By the middle of August I am due at Northfield if I can manage to get away. Then my wife and I hope to shake off the dust of this land and go cruising in the West Indies, to see Jamaica and some other islands which we had to miss on our previous trip. That's how the programme goes.

"I have a tale for you. A clergyman at Albany told me of a notice board outside a church which ran thus: 'Annual Strawberry Fête: Admission 25 cents.' Then came the hour and the date, with this caveat below: 'Owing to the depression, prunes



will be served.' Prunes instead of strawberries! What a down-come! I've never liked prunes: got too many in my childhood. But I would rather have no dessert at all than be put off with prunes: wouldn't you?"

Another letter dated March 1, 1936, refers to my retirement. "It was good to see your kind, wise face looking at me, or rather past me, in 'The Christian World,' which arrived this morning. But I could have wished for a happier occasion. And so you are leaving the bridge of the ship. Well, so it must be, I suppose: but I hate these changes. The one consoling feature is that you may get some leisure now and freedom from worry—which you have richly earned.

"... I've been so busy with college work and Lenten services that reading has almost ceased except for professional purposes. Extra correspondence for my wife has added to the arrears of my own. Alas, how I dislike answering letters! Every week brings me some from folk who have been reading my translation of the Bible, and write (as Americans do) as if I had time to compile a dictionary article on this point and that. It's all very interesting but, man, it's exhausting. Two sets of people are always writing, oddly enough; the Group Movement, and the Christian Scientists. I wonder why?"

The next month Dr. Moffatt wrote again: "Your letter made me sore and sad, dear friend. I shook to read of your accident and I was hurt to think of your being hurt in mind as well as in body over the C.W.<sup>1</sup> Alas, alas! But in your letter a trace of characteristic courage shews through. I don't know what to say about your tidings. They revealed a lot of what you have had to pass through during these months; but it serves no purpose, does it? to discuss the troubles, except to assure you, if you need to be assured, how deeply I felt with you, and for you, over this ghastly happening. The circumstances of the affair are maddening. I can faintly imagine how you are laying hold of things again and trying to look forward. But what it must cost you in nerve! . . . You will be realising, I am sure, that you have true friends left who honour you and believe in you and are grateful to you.

<sup>1</sup> During my convalescence from a fractured skull I received a demand from the proprietor of the paper for my resignation of the editorship of "The Christian World."

Pray count me among them. It was a happy day when we met, happy for me, and I cannot think you can have many who cherish dearer hopes for you than I do."

A letter in February 1938 begins: "Your letter made me feel bad and good. Good, to think one has still so forgiving a friend: bad, because you got ahead of me. For, honestly (to the *n*th power) I've been meaning ever since Christmas to send you a long overdue letter, once the tide of examination papers abated. 'Write,' said my conscience. 'No hurry,' said the evil demon who gets behind my pen. Every time I read an article of yours (and how particularly charming was that on 'Humorists in Parliament') I resolved to get started. And now you have overwhelmed me with this full kind gift.

"Well, it is fine to hear of your son and grandson. I can imagine how these two generations have helped you through a winter of discontent (in Shakespeare's sense of the term). You don't speak too reassuringly about yourself. But why apologize for playing bowls? I've always had a liking for that game. It and billiards will need to be the amusement of my own evening, if I've any evening, for my heart is now too rocky for golf or (I fear, I fear) for trout-fishing. But surely we'll manage to sit out a cricket match at Lord's, whether it's the Australians or not.

"By May I shall be a professor *emeritus*. Somehow one doesn't feel so apprehensive of that as one did a few years ago. . . . I wish the cracks in Hitler's house would widen. The infatuation of some Britishers for him and his sounds pathetic. Those who have recently been in Germany tell me how stifled the people really are. Of course, they know nothing of the outside world, poor souls, but a mad sheep may become a danger, and Hitler may feel obliged to madden his flock. Yet it is time quietly and firmly to call his bluff, surely, in the interests of sanity and peace. However, there is small profit in throwing words about in such perplexities, and I have a lurking hope that Chamberlain has his two feet on the solid earth.

"Well, this is a Sunday evening and it's late. In Chapel this morning I heard a good gospel sermon from one of my colleagues: only the dear man was done before he finished. You know what that means. At one point he had the congregation

hued and really awakened to his point. My soul called out to him 'Stop, man, for God's sake!' But would he? No. We had about ten more minutes which simply rubbed out the impression he had made. And all because the dear chap had written it.

"Then this afternoon my wife had one of her tea-parties for students, and we had two hours' entertainment to provide for over twenty of them. It leaves us rather fagged. Still, it is all in the day's work. They're learning to drink tea in the British fashion, and it seems to please them to spend a loose afternoon with their professor and his wife, if only to discover that the former is, on the whole, quite a human person."

Six months later Dr. Moffatt wrote from Scotland: "It's precisely a week since we sat on the Oval pavilion, hot and happy. But, indeed, this was only one of the kindnesses you lavished on me in London, and your parting 'God bless you!' as you left me on the tram was no formal phrase. I am truly and deeply grateful. It came back to me, and will come back to me often, I assure you. . . . I shall think of you at the Oval this week and hope to see the good men of our test team operating under your critical eye."

In December 1938, a letter came from New York: "The other day at a lunch party an American asked me if I knew the difference between an optimist and a pessimist. I said I had dimly heard of it with the hearing of my ear in the course of my pilgrimage. Whereupon he imparted this tale: Two men, after dining out at a restaurant, came to a coffee stall. *Optimist*: 'Let's have cream to it.' *Pessimist*: 'Is there any milk?' Well, let's hope for cream in 1939, politically and otherwise, and for a cessation for that soaring bounder Hitler.

"I've not been reading many new books of late: rather some old ones, like Scott's novels, and Boswell's 'Johnson,' and, believe me—Ruskin's 'Modern Painters.' How Ruskin can write! His prose is now and then of the grand order. His father always thought that he should have been a bishop: but he preached anyhow, and preached to a wider audience than he would have had in the Church. But I don't suppose our young people read Ruskin nowadays, do they?

"Had to preach at a Commemoration service in Harlem the

other Sunday, in honour of Tyndale and the English Bible. It was an Episcopal Church, crammed with 2,000 coloured folk. And how they sang! The Hallelujah chorus was superb. I only preached for twenty minutes but, my dear sir, the service lasted from 3.30 to 5.45. Fact! The procession of clergy, headed by acolytes with cross and candles, was so long and stately that even 'The Church's One Foundation' was not long enough to see us into the chancel, where I sat—the only white man—amid a choir robed in white and scarlet, with gleaming eyes in their dark faces. Such are some of my ecclesiastical adventures."

After the outbreak of war Dr. Moffatt wrote again from New York: "God knows I meant to write to you since the fateful die was cast, but somehow I hadn't the heart. Yet this week I had to be at Drew University giving the opening address, and lunched with Lynn Hough, who told me, among other things, of your grandchild's death.<sup>1</sup>

"What a tragic sorrow! The deaths of little children are among the sore mysteries of life, and that is not an abstract saying; you must believe me, for I have been through it in my own family. I was grieved to hear of what you and yours must have suffered in so strange and sudden a blow. One learns to take up life again and duties have a healing touch, but a thing like that never leaves heart and memory.

"As for the war, it came on us during our holiday on the Maine Coast. That Sunday at 7 p.m. a small group of us, Britishers and Canadians, listened to the King's quiet call with bated breath in a tiny cottage beside the Atlantic. A grey mist hung over sea and land. The one clear thing seemed to be the duty laid on us to see this thing through and to make a thorough job of it. . . . The more I see of it the more I feel that Hitler's gang are a menace to civilisation, and that his unscrupulous desperate plunges can only end in one way, provided we and France stand firm. Well, it is no use to discuss affairs—I haven't enough data—and anyhow one does not care to do much more than wait and pray.

"My youngest boy is with his regiment near the Forth Bridge.

<sup>1</sup> My only grandchild in England, a lovely and winsome baby girl of eighteen months, had died from an overdose of anaesthetic in a London hospital—"death from misadventure" as the Coroner's jury recorded.

My daughter is in some Government job in London. My daughter-in-law in Edinburgh is driving a motor ambulance. Their letters are cheery and end in the refrain, 'Don't worry.' One tries not to: but the thought of what victory may cost us in young bright lives is apt to overcloud one's faith, in tired hours. So my wife and I try to carry on, not expecting any immediate lightening of the sky, but clinging to the hope that the right will prevail."

Four years later Dr. Moffatt wrote: "Alas, alas! The news of your loss<sup>1</sup> has just reached me, and I must send you a line, if only to assure you how I think of you and pray for you in these days of your new loneliness. Dean Hough had told me of your anxiety about Mrs. Porritt's health. So I was not entirely unprepared for the tidings of her death. Still, when a sorrow like this comes, even though it has cast its shadow already, there is a poignancy about it, and I grieve deeply to think of this break in your married happiness. When I began my ministry a wise old minister bade me always include in my intercessory prayers not only 'Widows and Orphans' but 'Widowers.' I don't think I ever forgot this clause. . . . God bless you and uphold you, my dear friend."

In conversation Dr. Moffatt shone even more dazzlingly than as a letter writer. A talk with him was an adventure in wide-ranging fields. It was no amble. Dr. Moffatt exerted his mental powers when he talked, and also when he listened. To quote W. J. Cory's line I recall how often he and I "tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky."

Whether modern translations—like Dr. Moffatt's and Dr. Weymouth's—stimulate Bible reading is a question upon which I have no data to form a judgment. But I hope they do. The decline of Bible reading within my own life-time is beginning to show its influence on British life and character. A preacher can no longer safely assume that an Old Testament reference, or an allusion to a Biblical character, will command recognition by his hearers. An American minister said some years ago that if a preacher wanted an illustration of physical strength it was safer to mention Babe Ruth (a famous base-ball player) than Samson. The same kind of thing is fast becoming true in England. A well-

<sup>1</sup> The death of my wife and companion for forty-three years.

educated typist (she had taken the school-leaving certificate) who was typing a book for me, rang me up on the telephone to say there was a sentence in my manuscript which baffled her. The sentence was "Tell it not in Gath." The word "Gath" was new to her, she said. In my early years, John Bright's constant use of the stately language of the English Bible was a prime factor in his compelling grip as an orator. Joseph Chamberlain, who in his youth was a Unitarian Sunday School teacher, and knew his Bible well, often used a Scriptural phrase with telling effect. Mr. Lloyd George freely quoted Scripture, and Mr. Winston Churchill often lets us see that he is not unfamiliar with Holy Writ. But the younger generation of political speakers—Mr. Ernest Brown is a conspicuous exception, for he knows the Bible from Genesis to Revelation—almost ostentatiously eschew that well of English undefiled. In the pages of Hansard nowadays a Biblical quotation is as rare as a Latin tag. The most valuable store-house of our English prose is, indeed, falling into sad neglect. I recently surprised a little company of well-educated young people by saying that we have Biblical authority for saying that "God winked." Dr. D. W. Brogan says that he found in an excellent "thriller" the phrase "like Galileo, he cared for none of these things," and he wondered if even those who do not confuse Gallio with Galileo would be able to say what Gallio did not care for, and who and what he was. It would surprise more people to-day than at any time since the Wesley Revival to be told that "Providence tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," and "Nation shall speak peace unto nation," are not in the Bible.

## FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES

*Sir James Frazer, O.M.—C. F. Andrews—G. K. Chesterton—Hilaire Belloc—Dr. Reaveley Glover*

MY memory of meeting Sir James Frazer, O.M., is one of sheer embarrassment. Lady Aberdeen had invited me to be one of her guests at a League of Nations dinner at the Lyceum Club, and on the morning of the dinner had, after much persuasion, induced me to speak, as Sir Joseph Cook, the New Zealand Commissioner in London, had fallen ill and could not fulfil his promise. In the reception hall Lady Aberdeen introduced me to a Lady Frazer who I was to take in to dinner. The lady explained that she was stone deaf, and that it would be useless for me to talk to her until we went in to dinner, when she would put a microphone on the table between us and I could talk into that. At the dinner-table, with that instrument of torture between us, Lady Frazer asked me if I knew her husband. I had to explain that I really did not know which Lady Frazer she was. "My husband," she then explained, "is Sir James Frazer." "The author of 'The Golden Bough'?" I asked. "Yes," answered Lady Frazer. I told her that I knew "The Golden Bough" (in the abbreviated edition) and had also read Sir James's book on "Totemism," and that I greatly prized his "Passages of the Bible: chosen for their literary beauty and interest." "Then you must meet him," said Lady Frazer, and she promptly introduced me to Sir James, who was sitting on the opposite side of the table. I felt first that it was an honour to meet the world-famous anthropologist; then came the horrible thought that I had to make a speech with Sir James in my audience. My appetite disappeared, in sheer fright at the impending ordeal. I did not eat any dinner. When my turn came to speak I began by telling an American story of a man who went to sleep during a curtain lecture by his wife, woke up, heard his wife's voice, and asked: "My dear, are you talking yet, or again?" Glancing across at Sir James Frazer I saw, to my relief, that I had at least amused him. When the oratory was

over, Sir James thanked me for my "interesting speech," a remark which I interpreted as mere politeness. He added, however, that he would like us to meet again. The opportunities for such meetings were few, but we exchanged some friendly letters, and by his invitation I was one of the thirty-five guests at a party given by Sir James and Lady Frazer to celebrate the thirty-fifth anniversary of their wedding—when the cake adorned with thirty-five candles was cut at 5.35 p.m. Sir James was fast going blind, and Lady Frazer's hearing was almost gone. They were a very united couple—interdependent, because Lady Frazer read aloud to her husband to spare his eyes, and he acted as ears for her in her deafness. When they were up at Cambridge, living in Trinity College, where Sir James had his Fellow's Chambers, he was occasionally seen with a basket in his hand, going to the shops to do the household shopping for Lady Frazer. She wrote fairy stories, and on their thirty-fifth wedding day both she and her husband published a new book, and presented a copy to each other. They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and happily in death they were not divided, for Lady Frazer died a few hours after her husband.

Sir James Frazer came of a Presbyterian family in Glasgow, but as the years went on, he confessed, the dogmas of Christianity ceased to have any hold on him. I think he would have described himself as a reverent agnostic. That he was pious, at least in the sense that he placed spiritual values first in his thought and living, is patent from the introduction to his volume of "Passages of the Bible: chosen for their literary beauty and interest," where he says: "Though many of us can no longer, like our fathers, find in its (the Bible's) pages the solution of the dark, the inscrutable riddle of human existence, yet the volume must still be held sacred by all who reverence the high aspirations to which it gives utterance, and the pathetic associations with which the faith and piety of so many generations have invested the familiar words." The exquisite simplicity of Sir James Frazer's literary style reflected the essential simplicity of his character. He made no parade of his vast learning, and no one who did not know his high standing in the world of scholarship would ever have imagined that the little old gentleman with such a quiet manner



and soft voice was the author and scientist to whom all the world gave honour and homage.

Two well authenticated stories about Sir James Frazer show his possession of an extraordinarily sensitive conscience. When someone detected a slight misquotation in "The Golden Bough" he wrote at once to the authorities at Trinity College offering to resign his Fellowship—he thought that his little lapse discredited the reputation of his College. When he found that for some years he had been carrying a bag of books on his train journeys between Glasgow and Edinburgh which exceeded the weight allowed as free luggage, he calculated carefully the amount out of which, unconsciously, he had deprived the railway company, and sent a cheque for that sum. Moreover, in face of the reluctance of the directors, he insisted that the cheque must be accepted and finally wrote telling the directors that they were neglecting their duty to their shareholders, whose money it was that he was refunding. Carried into his immense research work this absolute integrity made Sir James Frazer one of the most reliable of authors. I think he died a poor man: in his last years, when his eyesight had completely failed, he was glad to accept an offer from one of the London City Companies to pay for the services of a secretary to help him finish his last book "The Fear of Death."

It was my privilege to enjoy for twenty years an intimate friendship with C. F. Andrews, the Indian missionary, the friend of Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore, and one of the truest saints of modern times. Andrews, or "Charlie," as he insisted on being called by his friends, knew India as few Europeans have ever known it. He got nearer to the heart of the Indian people than any man of his generation. He gave his own heart to them, understood them, and allied himself with their aspirations. His was a strange career. He went up to Cambridge as a scholar of Pembroke College, a member of the Catholic Apostolic Church (Irvingites, as they were once called) but joined the Anglican Church, and held high Church views. Taking a double first—in classics and theology—he seemed destined to stay at Cambridge as a don, but an urge toward service as a foreign missionary took him to India. Charlie Andrews, it was soon clear, was not going to be a conventional missionary. He would not proselytise. His

idea was to live the Christian life among the Indian people, and be a "good diffused, and in diffusion even more intense." Nor would he conform to denominational conventions. When a Baptist missionary fell ill Charlie Andrews offered to conduct the Sunday services in the Baptist Mission Chapel. His Bishop forbade him to do so, and threatened to inhibit him if he persisted. Andrews kept his promise to preach for the Baptist brother, and then sent his resignation from the Anglican Church to the Bishop. Thenceforward, he was an interdenominationalist—"Mr." not "Rev."—the friend of all missions, and a man welcomed on all religious platforms. His conception of Christianity challenged many conventions. For one thing he utterly refused to recognize any colour bar. In India he was the friend of all Indians—caste and outcaste—wore Indian dress, ate Indian food, and lived in a close sympathy with the common people while retaining the friendship and confidence of men of high caste. I should not describe Charlie Andrews as an ascetic, because asceticism is a policy, and Andrew's asceticism was the outcome of an utter disregard of the good things of the world. He wore shabby tweed clothes—I never saw him except in what looked like the same old suit—and he gave no thought to food save that he did not eat meat, and really ate very little of anything. Whenever he lunched with me he asked for the same fare—green vegetables, curried rice, an orange (perhaps two) and a few nuts. He was a bachelor with no settled home—not even a *pied-à-terre*, until a few years before his death Pembroke College gave him an honorary fellowship, which carried with it a suite of rooms in the College. He travelled over the world—travelling cheaply it is true—but where he got the money for his journeyings I never could ascertain. He never had any money.

Once he came to see me to tell me that he wanted to go to the Southern States of America to study educational methods at Hampden and Tuskegee: but he had no money to pay his transatlantic passage. I promised to see what I could do, and wrote to my friend Dr. Jesse Jones, the Secretary of the Stopes-Phelps Fund (a foundation set up by two American ladies for the study and promotion of negro education), and Dr. Jesse Jones sent me the necessary money for Andrew's expenses. Andrews went

to the United States intending to stay three months: he stayed over a year. Americans made an idol of this humble man of God. A photograph of him was published with the caption "C. F. Andrews—the missionary who resembles the Apostle John." Andrews published a sort of spiritual autobiography entitled "What I owe to Christ," and to his amazement it proved a best seller. The handsome royalties earned for him by the book bewildered him. "I have never had so much money," he told me, "and I scarcely know what to do with it." I am quite sure that he was not tempted into a single personal luxury.

Finding that his book "What I owe to Christ" met a felt need, Charlie Andrews planned to write a *Life of Christ*. Believing that he could do it better in an Oriental atmosphere—he often reminded us that Jesus was an Oriental, but was always interpreted by Occidentals—he went out to India in 1937 to settle down to writing the book. Why it was never written I cannot say. His last letter to me, written from Pembroke College, had a definite farewell tone, and he may have suspected that we should never meet again. He died in 1940, and on his desk was the manuscript of a study, in ten chapters, of the Sermon on the Mount (with an introduction by his friend Rabindranath Tagore) which he may have intended to incorporate in his projected "Life of Christ." As his friend Agatha Harrison says in an introductory note to the volume in which this study was published: "C. F. Andrews did not write his 'Life of Christ': he lived it." Charlie Andrews was a gentle, good, unselfish, and affectionate man about whom there clung the fragrance of spiritual loveliness—one of those rarely beautiful souls who live on in the minds and hearts of those who knew and loved them.

I do not remember exactly in which year it was that Mr. G. K. Chesterton, a mountainous figure—"monstrous fat" as Mr. Pepys would have said—sailed into Fleet Street, looking the exact image of Velasquez' portrait of a Spanish gentleman. Chesterton's protuberance must have been a sore burden to him, yet he dressed in a style that accentuated his bulk. Before I knew him personally I saw him one day chasing his wideawake felt hat which was dancing along before a strong wind blowing down Essex Street. He cut a ludicrous figure. Twice he caught

up to his hat and leaned to pick it up, but apparently he could not get down to it. A boy coming out of a publisher's office came to his rescue and recovered the hat.

G. K. Chesterton leapt into sudden fame. Like Byron, he woke one morning to find himself famous. It was his book on Browning, published in 1904, in the "English Men of Letters" series, that did this. It is a brilliant book, but Chesterton made all his quotations from memory, and I believe that not a single one was accurate. The publisher's reader was almost driven frantic over corrections. Early in his career Chesterton wrote, at my request, for "The Christian World." It was about the time when he and Robert Blatchford were carrying on a running controversy over free will—Blatchford in "The Clarion," Chesterton in any paper to which he was a contributor. He would come into my room and write his articles sitting in an easy chair in front of the fire. Occasionally, if I was out, he would sit at my desk, and leave my blotting-paper covered with little pencil drawings—some of them exceedingly clever, and some very weird and grotesque. I am sorry I never kept any of Chesterton's "doodlings."

One day he came and asked: "If I write you an article this morning, can I have a cheque for it at once?" "Most certainly," I said. He sat down and wrote, chuckling to himself over his merry paradoxes. The article took him about an hour to write. I got him the cheque (at that time he was quite content to write 800 words for three and a half guineas) and he asked if I could have it cashed for him. I cashed it and gave him the money. "Thank you so much," he said in his high treble voice (that voice which, he said, was the original mouse to which the mountain gave birth after so much labour), "I am obliged to you. The fact is that I had no money to pay my cabman, and I had to keep him waiting outside while I earned this money." I asked him why he had not let me pay the cabman to avoid running up such a big fare, but he replied that that would have been borrowing money, and he added: "I should never dream of doing that." On another occasion I gave him a book which we had just published to review—a volume of religious essays by Jonathan Brierley ("J. B."). Chesterton took the book and came back in an hour

to say that he had lost it. I got him another copy. Next morning a barmaid from "The George"—a public house near by—came into the office bringing back the missing book. "A fat man," she said, "left it on our bar."

Early in the first great war one of those disgusting women who thought they were doing something patriotic in giving white feathers to men who were not wearing khaki tackled G. K. Chesterton. "Why aren't you out at the front?" she asked. "Madam," replied G. K. C., "if you will look at me sideways you will see that I am." Chesterton was perhaps the last of the long line of natural Bohemians. One could almost see in him a direct descendant of Samuel Johnson "taking a walk down Fleet street" with Oliver Goldsmith. Chesterton never concerned himself about time. He had his watch stolen by a pickpocket, and he did not buy another. "Why," he asked, "should one want to know the time?" He simply took time "to stand and stare," as an inalienable right. In some respects he was an irresponsible child, as he confessed in the lines in which he expresses his attitude to work:

"Thus I my life conduct,  
Each morning sees some task begun,  
Each evening sees it chucked."

It is said that one night he telegraphed to his wife: "I am at Market Harborough: where am I supposed to be to-night?" "Home," wired Mrs. Chesterton. Chesterton's view of motoring was wittily summed up in his saying that he would rather lie in a field watching the motors flash by, than sit in a car and watch the fields flash by. He was chock full of illogical prejudices, but he had not an enemy in the world.

Some of Chesterton's *obiter dicta* are worth preservation as ashes of genius. "Nothing," he said, "is more touching in English life than the kindness of the poor to the rich." "It was not the Battle of Waterloo that was won on the playing fields of Eton: it was the Battle of Peterloo that was won there." It isn't not knowing things that is so dangerous: what is dangerous is knowing so many things that are not so." "The British worker is usually far more interested in the inequality of forces than in the equality of man." And his reference to "the

collectivist ticket collector on the Fabian tram calling out 'Next stop: Utopia,' " deserves to be remembered.

Chesterton had a profound admiration—adoration, almost—for his friend, Mr. Hilaire Belloc, and sounded his praises privately as well as publicly. They were guests together at a Whitefriars Club dinner to which a friend took me. Both spoke delightfully. Mr. Belloc was far the better speaker, and I think the better writer, for though the Roman Catholic propaganda that seeps into all his books exasperates me, I nevertheless read them and revel in his fine, nervous, lucid English. Some pregnant lines of his verse have companied me—I cannot say comforted me—in times of loneliness:

"A lost thing could I never find,  
Nor a broken thing mend:  
And I fear I shall be all alone  
When I get towards the end.  
Who will there be to comfort me  
Or who will be my friend?"

Mr. Hilaire Belloc's magical use of English words is all the more noteworthy since his father was a Frenchman. One of his ancestors on his mother's side was Dr. Priestley, the discoverer of oxygen and a famous Unitarian in his day. Mr. Belloc's half-French origin recalls a story of his Oxford days. When he had graduated from Balliol he went to France to serve his time as a conscript artilleryman. Then he returned to Oxford for a while, and Dr. Benjamin Jowett invited him to dinner in Hall. Mr. Belloc, who is a brilliant talker, rather monopolized the conversation at the High Table by a prolonged disquisition on the splendour of France's contribution to European culture. Jowett fidgeted uneasily, and then interrupted the monologue by asking: "Do you know, Mr. Belloc, what is written over the portal of hell?" Mr. Belloc hesitated a moment and then replied: "I suppose, sir, you mean Dante's line, 'All hope abandon, ye who enter here.' " "No, no," piped Dr. Jowett. "What is written over the portal of hell is '*Ici on parle Français.*' "

Dr. T. Reaveley Glover (who died while these memories were being committed to paper) was one of the most easily misunderstood men of his day and generation. A friend of his once said,

on a public platform, that he had wished to hate Glover but, alas! could not help loving him. That was not an uncommon experience. It was my own. Glover was not unlike Tennyson, of whom Mrs. Cameron said (to Tennyson himself) that when people met him they expected to see a lion but found a bear. For Reaveley Glover could be, and often was, unendurably brusque and rude. He was great enough as a Latinist to have been a Regius professor at Cambridge, but his tongue was feared, and roused prejudices against him. It was his misfortune that he always showed his worst side to people he was meeting for the first time, and a bad first impression has a trick of abiding. I once introduced him to Dr. Paul Hutchinson, a distinguished Chicago journalist, the managing editor of "The Christian Century," and in two minutes Reaveley Glover was bitterly assailing Hutchinson for something about himself that had appeared in that paper some years before. Hutchinson was furious; as he was my guest I was, to say the least, embarrassed. My own first meeting with Reaveley Glover was on a river trip on the Cam over thirty years ago. His father, Dr. Richard Glover, was with him, and when Reaveley Glover and his father were together anyone breaking in upon them was an intruder and a nuisance. Reaveley Glover "how do you do'd" when we were introduced, and then cut me dead. I withdrew rebuffed and sore. Later I came to see something infinitely beautiful in the relationship between Reaveley Glover and his father. They were all-sufficient to each other—filial devotion on one side, parental pride on the other. Some years later I found some snapshots I had taken on that river party, and I sent a print of one photograph—in which Dr. Richard Glover "came out" in all his splendid dignity—to his son. At once it made me his friend for life. Whenever we met afterwards I saw the best side of Reaveley Glover's character—his genius for friendship, and his capacity for kindness, as well as his love of humour and clean mirth.

There were, in truth, two very contradictory Reaveley Glovers—the provocative, arbitrary, and overbearing man, and the tender, affectionate, winsome man, who bound his friends to himself with hoops of steel. He could pass in the twinkling of an eye from a mood that was almost truculent to one of gracious

kindliness. He played no games, was interested in no sport, and was a non-smoker as well as a total abstainer. His one great outlet was talk. He loved it. And he was a brilliant talker with flashing wit at his command. I saw him at his best when we were a week together at Mürren, as guests of Sir Henry Lunn at one of his Reunion Conferences. Glover's gay humour was infectious then. I quoted to him the revised version of Burns' lines:

"O wad some power the giftie gie us  
To see some folk afore they see us,"

and Glover promptly dashed off half a dozen delicious verses dealing just as irreverently with several other equally familiar lines of poetry.

We got a glimpse of the pugnacious side of Reaveley Glover at that Mürren Conference. Dr. Rawlinson, who was then a Canon of Christ Church, and one of the very small band of men who have taken "three firsts" at the University, is now Bishop of Derby. In a paper at the Mürren Conference he made a disparaging reference to Glover's "Jesus of History." Dr. Glover claimed the right to reply, and did so with force and some asperity. The discussion between the two doughty debaters was lively, not to say fiery, but the clash left no wounds. Dr. Glover and Dr. Rawlinson sank their differences as they stepped down from the platform. I think both had really enjoyed a gladiatorial contest, in which the combatants were well matched.

My last meeting with Reaveley Glover was in Moore's Hotel at Folkestone where we were fellow-guests of Dr. J. C. Carlile—a very dear friend of both of us—on the night that he ended his long and memorable pastorate at Rendezvous Street Baptist Church. It was the height of the momentous Munich crisis. Mr. Ernest Brown was there too, and we all talked with fitting gravity about the situation in Europe, over which the storm clouds hung heavily. Glover was anxious and fearful. He loved the British Empire—especially Canada—and had forebodings that war might strain, even snap, the Imperial ties. This, I think, made him a convinced advocate of appeasement. "If," he said, "to-night my sons had to fight and even die to defend the British Empire it would be a grim necessity, but I do not see why they



should fight and die to keep three million Sudeten Germ under Czecho-Slovak rule." I suggested that that was not re the issue—what I thought was at stake was the sanctity of treat and the question whether the German despot should over-run Europe, and possibly, in the long run, dominate the whole wor As Glover saw the issue that night it was whether or not Hi had the right to redress, by force, the grievances of Germ living under alien rule. But running through all that he s there was a belief in a providential order which, if war ca would sustain the forces on the side of right against might, a good against evil. For Reaveley Glover was essentially a man God—through and through. I confess that his quiet confide nerved me for the world tragedy that followed all too soon.

Reaveley Glover had once a curious passage of arms with I Frank Buchman, the founder of the Oxford Group Moveme Dr. Glover had gone to America for a year to lecture at Y: Before his course was finished he got homesick, and his hea was indifferent, so the Yale University authorities allowed h to bring his lecture course to a close before the appointed d: This left him free to return home a month earlier than he l planned. Dr. Buchman was organizing a Group Conference Washington, and, hearing that Dr. Glover was curtailing Yale engagement, pressed him by letter and telegram to go the Washington Conference. Glover emphatically declin whereupon Dr. Buchman journeyed to New Haven to indu him to change his mind. Glover insisted that it would be a gr breach of faith on his part to accept Buchman's invitation to Washington Conference after the Yale authorities had relea him so generously. "But that is all right," said Buchman. "Y need not concern yourself on that point—I have sought guida on this matter, and God assures me that you can go to Washington Conference with an easy conscience." "No replied Glover, "that won't do for me, Buchman! My God i gentleman, and I am *not* going to Washington." And he c not go.

Here are a few of Reaveley Glover's *obiter dicta*: "Missie aries' wives are an acquired taste." "Marriage is a defin commitment to a quite indefinite risk—like buying a raz

price no relation to value." "In the next new dictionary all words ending in -otic will be listed as synonyms—neurotic, patriotic, idiotic."

Three of Reaveley Glover's books had a large sale and a wide-spread influence—"The Jesus of History," which was immensely popular, "The Christ of Experience," which was virtually his *credo*, and "The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire"—the last a solid contribution to history. If he survives as an author it will, I think, be by his "Jesus of History": but it is probable that his name will also be carried down the ages by the College boat-song<sup>1</sup> he wrote for the Lady Margaret Boat-club.

<sup>1</sup>     Vive laeta,  
          Margareta,  
Beatorum insulis;  
      Si possimus  
      Fucrimus  
Semper caput fluminis.

## CHAPTER XVII

### ABOUT SOME AUTHORS

*An old "Smith Elder's" list—Late Victorian authors—Mrs. Humphry Ward—Conan Doyle—J. M. Barrie—Dr. W. H. Fitchett—S. R. Crockett—Sir Michael Sadler—Philip de Laszlo*

I PICKED up recently in a second-hand bookshop a copy of Henry Seton Merriman's novel "In Kedar's Tents," and paid sixpence for it. The book was published in 1897 by Smith, Elder and Co. The last four pages of the volume (then in its third edition) are given up to a list of Smith Elder's new books of that year. The date and the list conjure up memories and suggest reflections. The date itself, 1897, "starts a wing." It was the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee—that time of imperialistic swagger which startled Rudyard Kipling into writing his "Recessional." Over the forty-eight intervening years I can still recall the hushed mood in which we first read in "The Times" Kipling's solemn warning against trusting in "recking tube and iron shard," and the prayer to God, "Be with us yet . . . let we forget, lest we forget!" The poem was intended to calm a fever which Kipling had had his full share in provoking.

The first name to catch my eye in that Smith Elder list of 1897 was that of Mrs. Humphry Ward. A cheap popular edition of her "Marcella" is among the books advertised in this catalogue. Who, I wonder, reads "Marcella" now? Who, indeed, thinks of reading any of Mrs. Humphry Ward's novels? It was her fate to be read by everybody, and then by nobody. She was a "best seller" in the 'nineties, and "Robert Elsmere"—boomed by a review by Mr. Gladstone—set the religious world in a ferment. I saw Mrs. Humphry Ward only once. There was just a suggestion in her expression of her famous uncle, Matthew Arnold, whom I once saw on an Atlantic liner at Liverpool as he was sailing for America. Mrs. Humphry Ward toiled hard at her novel-writing. Sir Max Beerbohm is credited with having said that "he liked to look out of his bedroom window about three o'clock in the morning and think that Mrs. Humphry Ward

was still writing." Mr. Humphry Ward was the art critic of "The Times," but his close association with art dealers led to friction with his editor. Once one of Mr. Humphry Ward's art-dealer friends wrote inviting him to lunch, adding: "If there is a Mrs. Humphry, bring her along, too."

Three novels of Conan Doyle's figure in the Smith Elder list for 1897. His name revives cricket memories. I saw him first when he was playing cricket at Shere with J. M. Barrie's Eleven of authors and artists—the Allahakbarries, as they came to be called. The match, I think, was against the actors. Barrie was captain, but, as such, exercised no discipline. Frankfort Moore, then a popular novelist, had journeyed to Shere on a newly acquired motor-tricycle, a novelty in those days. It was noisy and it smelt, but Frankfort Moore's pride in its possession quenched his enthusiasm for the cricket match. He placed it close to the long-off boundary where he was fielding, and when the ball was not coming his way—and once or twice when it was—he slipped away to start up the noise and smell of his petrol-driven tricycle.

A. E. W. Mason played in the same match. So did J. C. Snaith and Leonard Merrick and Shan Bullock. This was not the occasion when—as Barrie records in "The Greenwood Hat"—Augustine Birrell, who often played for the Allahakbarries, broke Barrie's bat with a swipe to leg, and then cried: "Bring me some more bats!" I heard Barrie consulting Conan Doyle about his own old bat. He said it was cracking badly and needed pegging, to which Conan Doyle replied that the bat had had its day, and that Barrie ought to buy a new one. Barrie meditatively answered that he thought "it had some life left in it."

One name in the Smith Elder list is that of a man who is forgotten now, I imagine, though forty years ago Dr. W. H. Fitchett's reputation was spread over three continents. In those imperialistic days his books, "Fights for the Flag" and "Deeds that won the Empire," ran into countless editions, and Dr. Fitchett was a man of consequence in the literary world. He was an Australian Methodist Minister whose appointment, under Conference, was the Principalship of a Young Ladies' School near Melbourne. Evidently he had ample leisure for prolific

literary work, for besides writing his famous books, he edited "The Australian Review of Reviews," and a weekly paper called "The Southern Cross." As an editor he was an adept with the scissors. He raided the columns of the London "Christian World" almost week by week, reprinting (without acknowledgment) any article that suited his taste. Once, when he was in London, I chided him, gently, about the extent and regularity of these raids. "Yes," he replied, quite unrepentantly, "I am afraid we *are* predatory." He shared my cricket enthusiasms, and I forgave him much.

Dr. Fitchett was an intimate friend of George Smith, then the head of the house of Smith, Elder and Co., and he persuaded George Smith to publish his reminiscences—which included memories of the Brownings, Thackeray, George Eliot, and a host of other Victorian notables. The plan was that George Smith should give his reminiscences to Dr. Fitchett in conversations at prolonged interviews, with a third person present "taking notes." Dr. Fitchett begged me to be the third person, but I did not feel free to undertake the task, and a very delightful job had to be passed on to a colleague. The name of George Smith ought to be enshrined in British memory. He spent a vast fortune—which was made, not out of his publishing business, but out of the sale of a famous mineral water which was his monopoly—on the "Dictionary of National Biography," a truly monumental contribution to the literary wealth of the English nation. Besides the mineral water which he popularized, George Smith had an interest in an aperient water ("Apenta," I think it was called) and he went to America to put it on the market there. A whirlwind advertising campaign was planned, and whole pages were taken in newspapers all over the American continent. An expert copy-writer was engaged to write the advertisement. George Smith did not like what the expert produced. It was a short paragraph in this form: "Little John Jones of 110 Twenty-Fifth Street, Hartford, swallowed a pen-knife the other day. A stomach pump was used, and other remedies were applied, in vain. Then someone suggested trying 'Apenta,' the new aperient water. It was tried. It did not save little John Jones, but it opened the pen-knife."

The last name appearing in this Smith Elder's list of 1897 that arrested my attention and revived some memories, was that of S. R. Crockett, whose "Cleg Kelly" is advertised as having reached its thirty-second thousand. Crockett leaped into the literary field with "The Stickit Minister," and he held a place among "best sellers" for many years. It was the fashion to disparage Crockett and his stories. Israel Zangwill said that "he went up like a Crockett and came down like a Stickit."<sup>1</sup> But S. R. Crockett went on producing, almost mechanically, his steadily deteriorating stories without losing his public. And I believe there are even some people who can read his books to this day.

One of the most charming men I have ever had the good fortune to meet was the late Sir Michael Sadler, a man who served the cause of education with single-eyed devotion through a long life. Sir Michael and I were fellow guests at a semi-public dinner—our host, I think, was Dr. John S. Whale. Sir Michael and I were seated together at the table. I had been introduced to him as the editor of "The Christian World," and at once he found a link between us. "The Christian World!" he said. "I haven't seen it for ever so long, but I have sentimental memories about it. My wife was the daughter of a very staunch Nonconformist Yorkshireman, and when I was courting her 'The Christian World' was read almost to ribbons in their home. I came to be very fond of looking at the paper. It was very vigorous and efficient in those days. I should like to see it now: I wish you would send me one." I promised to do so. Then, after a delightful conversation over dinner, Sir Michael (having made his speech) left early to catch the train for Oxford, asking me to write and tell him if anything interesting happened after his departure. I fulfilled both promises—sent him a copy of the current week's "Christian World," and a brief little report of the later speeches, which had taken an unexpected and very interesting turn. A few days later Sir Michael replied and said: "It is a pleasure to see 'The Christian World' again. Quite an old friend! And may I venture to congratulate you on what you give to your readers. Just what we want.

<sup>1</sup> A "stickit" minister in Scotland is a cleric who has finished his course at the University and the Divinity Hall, and has been licensed to preach, but has not received a call to a pastorate. He has "stuck" on the way.

"Thank you for finding time to write about what happened at the dinner after I left. I hope (against hope) that when we die someone will send news of what really happened about the things one had to go away from before they were finished."

My slight acquaintance with Mr. Philip de Laszlo, the famous portrait painter, came about in odd circumstances. I had been attending a conference at Zürich, and just before midnight made my way to the railway station to get the night train for Paris. I had been wise enough to book my sleeping berths—for the outward and homeward journeys—before leaving London. On reaching my compartment on the *wagon-lit* I found a man of about my own age, with an air of distinction, in earnest conversation with a young man who looked as if he might be his son. I was putting my bag on the lower berth when the man remarked: "Oh, you are the lucky man, are you, who has got the lower berth?" I answered that I would gladly exchange my lower berth for his upper berth if it would add to his comfort. I explained that I had never been able to sleep in a *wagon-lit*, and so it made not a jot of difference to me whether I lay on the upper or lower berth. "I could not think," he replied, "of allowing you to give up your lower berth for me." Assuring him that I was making no sacrifice I put my suitcase on the upper berth, and left father and son to continue their colloquy until the train started. Then I returned to the compartment. My fellow-traveller looked up from reading a magazine, thanked me profusely again, and then suddenly asked me if I was a literary man. I said I was a journalist, and had three or four books to my credit or discredit—according to taste. "Has anyone ever told you," he asked, "that you bear a strong facial resemblance to George Meredith?" I assumed that he was joking, and laughed in mild derision. "Excuse me," he said, "but I was not joking, and I can't see why you should laugh. I have a right to say that you resemble George Meredith. It is my profession to study faces. And I painted George Meredith three times. I'm Philip de Laszlo." I could see that I had inadvertently nettled him, and the tone of his voice was sharp. "We'll not carry the resemblance to George Meredith any further," I said, "but I'm very delighted to meet Mr. Philip de Laszlo." For the rest of the journey to

Paris, and then on to London, we talked freely, and this companionship with Mr. de Laszlo remains a happy memory.

He was on the way home from Rome, where he had been painting Mussolini, and he had the portrait (in a large wooden case) with him in the compartment. The Duce had given him sittings on ten days. Mr. de Laszlo said Mussolini puzzled him. He would not say that he was a "bounder." He had been very pleasant as a sitter, though his manner was aggressive. We talked about Meredith, whom Mr. de Laszlo had found charming and quite unaffected.

Mr. de Laszlo had, I think, a kink of snobbery in his make-up. He corrected me rather sharply when I called him Mr. Laszlo—"de Laszlo, please," he said, very firmly. On the other hand he had none of the snobbery that would conceal the humbleness of his birth and upbringing. He told me that he was a poor boy in Buda-Pesth, and owed his art training in Munich and Paris to scholarships, without which he would have remained an obscure man. He spoke of his devotion to his mother, telling me that as soon as he began to earn money by portrait painting he made his mother a regular monthly allowance—increasing it as his prosperity grew. This led him to speak of his wretched experiences during the 1914-1918 war. When war broke out he went to the Bank of England to see what arrangements could be made to transmit, month by month, his usual monetary allowance to his mother—who, otherwise, would have no means of subsistence. The bank made the necessary arrangements without demur, and for a time the remittances went regularly. Then someone (Mr. de Laszlo suspected a clerk in the bank) informed Horatio Bottomley about the remittances, and through "John Bull" Bottomley started a furious campaign against Mr. de Laszlo for sending comforts to the enemy. The upshot was that Mr. de Laszlo was interned in the Isle of Man as an enemy alien. I think he realized that he had been indiscreet, but he flamed with fury against Bottomley.

A few days later I dined with Mr. and Mrs. de Laszlo at their beautiful home in Fitzjohn's Avenue. Mrs. de Laszlo was a daughter of the Guinness family of Dublin, and a very gracious hostess. In conversation at the dinner-table she asked—knowing



my association with "The Christian World"—if I knew Dr. Thomas Yates, the minister at Allen Street Congregational Church, Kensington. I told her that we were intimate friends, and had been for many years. Apparently in their Kensington days Mr. de Laszlo (occasionally) and Mrs. de Laszlo (very frequently) attended Allen Street Church, attracted by Dr. Yates's fine preaching and engaging personality. Mrs. de Laszlo spoke with undisguised enthusiasm of Dr. Yates. Mr. de Laszlo (who had apparently never begun to comprehend our English ecclesiastical divisions) could not understand why so eloquent and powerful a preacher was not made a Dean or a Canon of an English Cathedral.

A man who, once met, was never likely to be forgotten, was Sir John McClure, the headmaster of Mill Hill School. His personality was dynamic. There was something of the beauty of ugliness in his square face, large all-seeing eyes, and firm mouth. No one would have mistaken him for anything but a schoolmaster. To the first form boys at Mill Hill he must have seemed a very formidable person. The sixth form boys, who called him "the Bird," had learned something between love and reverence for their versatile and stimulating headmaster. I first met him when he had just been appointed headmaster of Mill Hill—sometime about 1893, I think. The old Nonconformist School was then at its nadir. It had had a long and worthy history, and a roll of headmasters and form masters of distinction. Sir James Murray, the lexicographer who planned and edited the great Oxford dictionary, began that great undertaking while he was a master at Mill Hill. Dr. Weymouth, who translated the New Testament into modern speech, was a former headmaster. Dr. Harley, a distinguished mathematician, was another scholar who taught at Mill Hill. But evil days had fallen on the school, and its glory had almost departed when Dr. J. D. McClure was appointed headmaster. I went to Mill Hill to interview him about his plans and hopes for resuscitating the old school. We talked for about two hours, and it was evident to me that Dr. McClure was not daunted by the difficulties confronting him. I recall his parting injunction. "Don't," he said, "say that the moral tone of the school is good: I hate that phrase. Say, if you like, that the

difference between right and wrong is emphasized at Mill Hill, and understood by the boys."

On a journey to the Italian lakes one spring I got into a railway carriage in Paris and found Sir John McClure and his intimate friend Mr. Herbert Marnham, who were going to Rome for Easter. We travelled together as far as Milan. Sir John was in a gay holiday mood, bubbling over with good humour. We swapped stories. Sir John was a Wigan man by birth, and he loved to tell Lancashire dialect stories. One that he told me was of a Mayor of Wigan who went to the Riviera, saw the Battle of Flowers at Nice, and conceived the idea of having a similar battle of flowers at Wigan. After the event the Mayor said, "It went a' rect as long as t' flowers lasted: then t' lads started cloddin' slutch" (throwing mud). Another of Sir John's stories was of a Wigan alderman who, having been twice defeated in his candidature for the Mayoralty, announced his intention to stand again. "Ah'll wear that vermin yet!" he said. Still another of Sir John's stories concerned a dispute in a Lancashire town about the erection of a wall around the cemetery. One objector put his argument in a nutshell. "What," he said, "is the good of a wall round a graveyard? Them as is in can't get out, and them as is out don't want to get in." My own contribution to these Lancashire stories was one about a Bolton man on a treadmill in Walton gaol, who was asked by a visiting magistrate if he had anything to complain about. He replied, "Nobbut this treadmill. It's out of date. If we'd had this in Bolton it 'ud ha' been running by power long before now."

## TWO NOBLE WOMEN

*Honnor Morten, a woman who revolutionized national health—Myfanwy Jones—Meeting King Khama—An afternoon with Tshekedi—Sir Edward Elgar—Sir Walford Davies*

AN article in "The Nursing Mirror" in April 1943, claiming that Miss Honnor Morten is "deserving of remembrance, for it was she who revolutionized the health of the nation" brought back many fragrant memories of a close friendship. To me Honnor Morten, dead thirty-five years, still speaks. She started one of the few really beneficent revolutions in history. Though I knew her so well, she never mentioned to me that at one time in her life she took two rooms in a tenement building over a fish and chip shop in Hoxton, and, with a group of sympathizers, engaged a nurse to live with her, and devoted her time to school children. This experiment, made in 1901, impressed the London School Board (of which Honnor Morten was a member) so much that the first school nurse was presently appointed by the Board. This nurse so proved her worth, and the necessity for the expansion of this social service became so evident, that a London School Nurses' Society was formed in 1904, under the auspices of the London County Council, with Honnor Morten as its President. "From that modest beginning," said "The Nursing Mirror," "grew the great national School Medical Service, as we know it to-day." No biography of Honnor Morten has ever been published, though her life story would serve as an incentive to women of leisure to devote their lives to the welfare of others. Her friend, and mine, Miss Alice Stronach—a Newnham girl who was a pioneer in women's journalism—undertook to write the biography, and was gathering material for the book, when death, during the Great War, put an end to the enterprise.

There was an element of romance in Honnor Morten's life. Her people were wealthy, and she spent her childhood at Ivy Hall, one of the old Stuart Palaces with gardens sloping to the river at Richmond. She studied at Bedford College, and then, in flat

defiance of parental wishes, took a full course of training as a hospital nurse. Then she compiled the "Nurses' Dictionary"—a book still in use—formed the Nurses' Association, a kind of Trade Union, edited "The Hospital," joined the Fabian Society, went on the London School Board, and finally gave herself, heart and soul, to welfare work among poor children in Hoxton. She wrote for the press, published at least one small book of her own, "Things More Excellent," and translated into English the love letters of Abelard and Heloise. She lived part of the year in a cottage at Assisi, and became imbued with the "wedded to poverty" principles of St. Francis. She cut out all luxury, dressed very simply (in Hoxton she was known to the children as "the lady in the brown cloak") and disciplined her life on Franciscan lines. Her last unadvertised enterprise was to spend an unexpected legacy on buying a large house with extensive grounds at Rothamfield, and to set up a restoration-to-health home for ailing children from Hoxton—working in conjunction with Mr. Pett Ridge, who ran a hospital-home there. Then cancer assailed her throat, and she died of strangulation after much agony. "I am waiting patiently for death," she wrote to me, "and I find the experience interesting." I went to see her a week before the end. "Now, be cheerful," she said, as I entered her little bedroom, "I don't want anything or anybody to interfere with me enjoying my dying." Her friendship was a joy when she was alive: it has been an ennobling memory ever since her death.

Another noble woman whose friendship was precious and whose every memory I prize was Miss Myfanwy Jones, the daughter of my friend for fifty years, Dr. J. D. Jones, C.H., of Bournemouth. Honnor Morten and Myfanwy Jones, had they met, would have found that they had much in common. Myfanwy Jones was a radiant personality, vivid, vital, with a fine sense of fun, a happy wit, and a rare range of accomplishments. Twice she went round the world with her father; she visited America at least a dozen times; and countless times she went to France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and the Baltic and Scandinavian states. As mistress of her father's home, after the death of her mother, she acted as hostess to a long succession of distinguished guests, and no one, I think, who visited the Mansie at Richmond

Hill Congregational Church, failed to appreciate her charm and graces. Upon her father, in his loneliness, she lavished care and devotion. She found time to work—at first in a junior capacity—in the Girl Guide movement, and began to reveal gifts of leadership and organizing ability amounting almost to genius. Soon she was Divisional Commissioner of the Girl Guides, embodying 8,000 girls in the Bournemouth area. She was given an old English camp alongside the Itchen at Dudsbury, a few miles out of Bournemouth, and created a Girl Guides' camping ground, with a fine permanent building—for which she raised the money—and a bathing pool. Girl Guides from far and wide were given the facilities of Dudsbury for their holidays. She took parties of Bournemouth Girl Guides for summer holidays in France and Switzerland, where they camped on the mountain sides. She went abroad to spread the Girl Guide movement on the Continent, and one summer (having previously gone through training in industrial work for the blind) she went to Estonia, where the blind are especially numerous, to teach the Girl Guides there how to help their blind sisters to earn their livelihoods. She became a Justice of the Peace, a member of the Bournemouth Education Committee, and of a round dozen of the other municipal organizations concerned with the welfare of children. When war broke out in 1939 she enlisted in the A.R.P., drove an ambulance, spent laborious days and nights organizing the housing of refugees from bombed Southampton, and was chairman of the committee for clothing the refugee children. Her public work, all done without fuss or advertisement, occupied almost every hour of the day: her telephone was hardly ever on the hook when she was at home. Her life was a consecration to the service of others, especially girls. One very near to her enumerated her qualities as courage and the power to convey courage, a fierce loyalty to her friends and to her principles, a stoical adherence to an almost ascetic code of her own, a power of organization that amounted to genius, an inborn gift of leadership, a very kind heart, and last, but not least, a glorious sense of fun. She had many accomplishments, an abounding joy in good books, and a fine appreciation of poetry. She played pretty nearly every game that a woman can play, swam like a

fish, and could keep a party going merrily, single handed. She could cook, clean out a cellar or a chicken house, scrub a floor, knit a jumper, do fancy needlework, mend stockings, grow vegetables, fruit, and flowers in her well-loved garden, and moreover, she seemed to enjoy doing all these things. When a coal lorry ran over Myfanwy Jones—as she was cycling to an Education Committee meeting in January 1944—Bournemouth people knew they had lost one of their most devoted citizens, a woman of marked individuality, and yet with all the womanly qualities. Myfanwy Jones greeted the unknown with a cheer. At the inquest into the circumstances of her tragic death (she was only 48) the coroner asked a man who had rushed to help her as she lay mangled under the lorry if Miss Jones said anything to him about the accident. “No, sir,” replied the witness, “What seemed to concern her most was that her blood was spoiling my clothes.”

Only once in my life have I shaken hands with a King, and he was a black one—King Khama, the great Chief of the Bamangwato tribe in Bechuanaland. Khama came to England in the mid-nineties with two other dusky African monarchs, Sebele and Bathong, to plead at the Colonial Office against the threatened loss of liberty by their countries and people through ceasing to be Protectorates of the British Crown. Sir Albert Spicer, who was then the Treasurer of the London Missionary Society, through which Khama had been converted to Christianity, acted as his cicerone while he was in England. Sir Albert invited me to a reception to Khama held before the Chief spoke at an ever memorable meeting in the City Temple. Khama's natural dignity impressed everyone. But he asked some awkward questions. When introduced to Miss Florence Balgarnie, a lady very active in social and temperance work, Khama asked, “Are you married?” “No, I am not,” Miss Balgarnie answered. “Has no man asked you?” was Khama's next embarrassing inquiry. Khama's visit to England and the success of his mission exasperated Cecil Rhodes, who swore that he would turn Sir Albert Spicer out of his seat at Newport, which he was representing in Parliament. When the next General Election occurred Sir Albert Spicer found himself opposed by Dr. Rutherford Harris, one of Rhodes's lieutenants, who was helped by a swarm of speakers

and canvassers said to have been financed by Rhodes. Sir Albert was "turned out."

Forty years after my slight encounter with King Khama I spent an afternoon with Tschekedi, now the reigning Chief of the Bamangwatos, who, soon afterwards, figured in an episode in Bechuanaland which all who took part in it must now wish to forget. A misunderstanding with the British officials arising out of Tschekedi's stern treatment of an Englishman who had "gone native" and had misconducted himself, led to a British Admiral, Sir Edward Evans, being sent with a file of marines and some artillery to bring Tschekedi to reason. The episode degenerated into farce. The British guns, sent to strike terror into Bamangwato hearts, got stuck in the sands of Bechuanaland, and Tschekedi, with a fine display of humour, sent some of his own men to pull them out. Sir Edward Evans, having cleared up the misunderstanding in a British sailor's easy way, had to beat a somewhat humiliating retreat from the scene. Tschekedi—to whom Sir John Harris, the Parliamentary Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society introduced me—impressed me as a very enlightened, capable, long-headed and high-principled young man, ardent in his determination to rule his people justly and wisely, and eager to raise their standard of life and culture. His rule is far more democratic than autocratic, since he governs and administers through what we should call a Committee or Parliament composed of his wisest men. He, like his father, is a Christian (educated at a South African Church of Scotland school) a non-smoker and a teetotaler. His outlook seemed to me liberal in most things—but not about the place of women. We asked him if he would give votes to his womenfolk. "No, no, no! certainly not," he answered, with a laugh that came near to mockery of such a ridiculous idea. When we asked him if he wanted Bechuanaland to be free from British protection he was just as emphatic. Like his grandfather Khama, Tschekedi wants nothing better than to have Bechuanaland remain a protectorate of the British Crown. He and his people took their share in the war against Nazi domination by sending Bechuana troops to serve in the Middle East.

When I was the guest of the Dean of Worcester (Dr. Moore Ede) for one of the Three Choirs Festivals I had an unforgettable

hour with two famous musicians, Sir Edward Elgar and Sir Walford Davies. Each had a composition being rendered at the Festival. I was with the Dean when the two musicians came into the Cathedral to hear their music rehearsed by the choir under the direction of Sir Ivor Atkins. The Dean introduced me to Sir Edward and Sir Walford, and the four of us went behind the choir and sat talking. Sir Walford was as gracious as you would expect from hearing his voice over the wireless. He exuded kindliness. I thanked him for helping me, by his wireless talks, to appreciate Bach; and I think it pleased him to have made a convert to Bach, whose music he once said was a vehicle for the very spirit of worship. In his diary, when he was at the Temple Church, he wrote: "On Sunday we are having the Christmas Oratorio, Part V, as a cantata, so Alexander will not preach a sermon. BUT BACH WILL."

But it was with Sir Edward Elgar that I had the longer and more intimate conversation. Musicians, so far as I have known them, have what I might call an artistic affectation. Sir Edward Elgar was perfectly natural, and threw up no barriers. He looked strangely unmusicianly—rather like a well-groomed professional man. He talked very freely. I asked him if he often visited his native heath (he was a Worcester man by birth) and I mentioned that I had a friend who remembered him as a school-boy. "A school-boy," Sir Edward replied. "It was not much schooling I had in Worcester. I had no education. My education did not begin until I went to Italy." I have gathered since that he attended a Roman Catholic elementary school at Worcester, but left early to help his father in a music shop. We struck a congenial subject when we talked about country life. Though I live near Epsom I did not venture to mention horse-racing—concerning which I am grossly ignorant—though that, I knew, was Sir Edward Elgar's primary interest, after music. We parted company when he heard the choir at the far end of the Cathedral start its rehearsal of a piece of his music. I am ashamed to say that I have forgotten what *opus* it was of Sir Edward's in that Festival Programme. Even a retentive memory has its lapses.



## A PRINCE OF PREACHERS

*Rev. Samuel A. Tipple of Norwood*

AN eminent American Methodist preacher—Dr. George W. Melton—once said, rather rashly, that “no man can do really great preaching to small audiences.” A supreme contradiction of that notion occurred to me at once—the Rev. Samuel A. Tipple of Norwood—incomparably the greatest preacher I have ever heard. For something like half a century Tipple preached (in his own words) to “the handful of people I am in the habit of addressing on religious subjects.” Robertson Nicoll, who was certainly a good judge of preaching, and who moved his home from Shere to Norwood to be near enough to attend Tipple’s ministry, once wrote, “There have been two men in my life whose preaching I could have listened to twice every Sunday, and those two were Parker and Tipple: I did that with Tipple for years and I never heard him preach a poor sermon.” Dr. R. F. Horton said in my hearing that he heard Tipple preach only once, but he never forgot that sermon. At one time Ruskin was often in the little congregation of about two hundred (the chapel only seated about 250) that gathered to hear Tipple—most of them intellectually elect people, who went down to Norwood from the West End of London by train. The Rev. Arthur Pringle of Purley told me that he had in his congregation quite a little group of “Tipple-ites,” and they were all alike in one respect—their fine spiritual sensitivity. “Tipple,” said Pringle, “seems to have put his *imprimatur* on them all.” I spoke about Tipple once to Mr. Lloyd George, and described him as a Baptist. “But I am a Baptist,” said Mr. Lloyd George, “and I’ve never heard of Tipple. Why didn’t someone tell me about him?” I replied that though Tipple preached in a Baptist Chapel his congregation was not composed of Baptists, and that Tipple himself, though originally a Baptist, never emphasized the distinctive Baptist principle, and was not *persona grata* with the Baptist Union. I

added that it was hearing of Tipple's heresies that led Spurgeon to launch the "Down Grade" controversy which split the Baptist denomination for nearly thirty years. I lent Mr. Lloyd George two volumes of Tipple's sermons and prayers, which captivated him so completely that I could not get the precious books back, until by having the second-hand book shops ransacked, he managed to procure copies of his own. It is, perhaps, too late now—since Tipple has been dead for twenty-eight years—to hope for a biography of this remarkable man. But as three of his volumes of sermons, meditations, and prayers are soon running out of copyright—and, in any case, are out of print—a memoir of the man and a selection of excerpts from his published utterances might well be produced to enshrine his memory. Dr. Fort Newton, when minister at the City Temple during the last war, fell under the spell of Tipple's genius through reading his books, and he urged me to write Tipple's biography. I felt that the necessary data were missing, and that someone who knew him personally, and had heard him preach more frequently than I had done—at the outside I did not hear him preach more than six or eight times—ought to undertake the duty. Since then the late Dr. George Jackson, the Methodist scholar, preacher, and writer, did Tipple-lovers a good service by gathering together (through "The Methodist Recorder") the memories of some people still living who knew and heard him.

Samuel Augustus Tipple was born in Norwich about 1826 (he died in 1916) and was brought up a Baptist, and was greatly influenced, spiritually, by an Evangelical clergyman, who later resigned his curacy on becoming convinced from his Bible study that Infant Baptism was not scriptural. Tipple, it seems, attended this Rev. Robert Govett's services in Surrey Road Chapel, and (as far as I can ascertain) was called to minister at a Baptist Chapel at Wolverhampton, without having any theological college training. In this he resembled Dr. Joseph Parker. After a few years at Wolverhampton Tipple became the minister of the Central Hill Chapel, Norwood, the scene of his life work. All his life Tipple was a student—a voracious reader of the very best literature. His "handful of people" at Norwood ministered to his intellectual needs by giving him books. But

they were not always books of the type he wanted to read, and it became his habit to hang a list of books that he did want to read on a notice board in the vestibule. Thus guided, donors would select a book from the list, cross out the title, and send the volume to Tipple by post. As the list was constantly changing there was evidently keen competition among his followers to present him with the books he required.

Central Hill Chapel was a drab little building externally, but the interior gave me a sense of holy calm, like an old Quaker Meeting House. And when Tipple was in the pulpit the silence was something that could be felt. No one coughed or shuffled, or made any sort of noise. Everyone knew that at the slightest noise Tipple would stop speaking, and admonish the offender with a fixed look from his bright bird-like eyes. Tipple's prayers were as arresting as his sermons, and in his reading of the Scriptures the cadences of his soft, sweet voice brought out all the poetry of the Authorized Version. In preaching he dispensed with notes and manuscript, used no gestures, scarcely even raised his voice, and certainly never shouted—but one felt that his hearers were hanging breathlessly, almost, on his words. Short in stature, slight in figure, with white hair and a wispy beard, his face (to borrow a phrase of the late Walter Friend's) "seemed to be lit from the inside." A singular, lonely man, unknown to his neighbours, he went his own solitary way, illuminating the minds and restoring the souls of several generations of select people who perceived and responded to his spiritual genius. The Rev. Walter Friend, a very dear old friend of my own, and one of the few men to whom Tipple revealed himself, writing to me a little while before his death said, "I never missed an opportunity, if I had a free Sunday, of hearing him. I recall one Christmas sermon. His opening sentence was 'Let us be children,' and he told the Nativity Stories in his exquisite way, just as written and as still believed by the great majority of Christians. Then he said 'Now let us be men,' and he drew out of this old mosaic the wonderful facts underlying the picture of the Christ that was born of Mary, by her husband Joseph, and how through all the ages He was being born of Abraham, of Moses, Isaiah, and the rest, so that one is enraptured by the thought that God's son, man,

was coming through all the ages, right up to Bethlehem." Tipple closed another of his Christmas Day sermons with these words: "'God's in His heaven, all's right with the world,' says the poet. No, no, Mr. Poet, God is in His heaven but all is not all right with the world: but because God is in His heaven I take it as an earnest and a surety that all will be right with the world: and in that assurance go cheerfully to dine."

And this is how S. A. Tipple prayed—extemporaneously:—"Come to us, O God, as we need; with just the touch of Thy hand, with just the whisper of Thy Spirit that we need—to the young in their fresh vigour and lightness of heart, with their natures yet unfixed; to the busy men, so busy, with buying and selling and getting gain, absorbed in the chase, the competition, and the craft; to the bent with years, in whom passion has cooled, and expectation grows drowsy, while they remember the former times; to those who are encamped just now at Marah, where the waters of life are bitter; to those whose portion is sweet, and their souls are comforted; to the sufferer in secret; to the perplexed with doubt; to the thinker in his solitude; to the philanthropic in their labours; to the sentenced criminal; to the little dreaming child. Come still, with Thy teaching, to the world, for its further learning; and with ever-renewed inspiration to Thy Church, until it shall come to Thy perfection."

No other preacher could have attracted the men and women who worshipped under Tipple of Norwood. For here was genius, and here was exquisite insight, opening magic casements of the soul. It was a seer who spoke from Central Hill Baptist Chapel pulpit at Norwood—a prophet of God, a poet, a dreamer, and a visionary, whose words had the wings of the morning. Crowds would have terrified him into muteness. Before a City Temple congregation he would have collapsed. No, he was predestined for intensive influence on a small community. And he did a great life-work, for he still lives "in minds made better by his presence." Mine is one of them.

## TOWARDS CHURCH UNITY

*The Father of the Ecumenical Movement, Robert P. Wilder—The Student Christian Movement—Edinburgh 1910—The World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches—The Copenhagen Conference—Dr. Nathan Söderblom—Sir Stafford Cripps—Dr. Burge (Bishop of Oxford)—The Happy Danes—Dr. Charles E. Jefferson*

SOMETIME during the winter of 1892-3, in a small private hotel at St. Leonards where I was spending a week-end, I met a young American, Robert P. Wilder, whom one might describe, in the light of later developments, as the Father of the Ecumenical Movement—a movement which is, increasingly, bringing the Christian Churches of the world into unity. The late Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. William Temple) said that the Church Unity Movement had its birth on the mission field. It was Robert P. Wilder who brought about the first phase of unity among missionaries. This growth of unity in the mission field led to the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910 out of which so much has grown in the last thirty years.

My recollections of Robert P. Wilder are perhaps somewhat hazy after the lapse of fifty years. He was, I remember, very amiable, and very intense. His primary interests were in foreign missions. He was already a widely travelled man, and by way of being a cosmopolitan. His parents were American missionaries. He was born in India in 1863 and educated at Princeton. He had also studied theology at Union Seminary, New York. He was married to a Norwegian lady. When only twenty-six Wilder had founded at Princeton what was first called the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions. Its members entered into a covenant declaring themselves "willing and desirous, God permitting, to go to the unevangelized portions of the world." This movement spread rapidly among undergraduates in American Colleges. By 1891 the movement had taken shape in Great Britain. By invitation Wilder visited Cambridge, Oxford, Edinburgh, Glasgow, London, and the Welsh and Irish Uni-

versities and so laid the foundations for what became the Student Volunteer Missionary Union of Great Britain and Ireland. By this time many men, subsequently to be famous figures like Dr. J. R. Mott, Donald Fraser, Tissington Tatlow, and Frank Lenwood, were associating themselves with the Student Volunteer Christian Union which had as its watchword, "The evangelization of the world in this generation." For this movement it has been claimed that it united Church and Chapel, that it united the new and the old Universities, and that it united England, Scotland, and Wales. The movement refused to quarrel with the orthodox or the unorthodox, respecting all views, and only asking the missionary students to unite on the missionary idea and the pledge to take up mission work.

The world-wide Christian Movement (known as the Ecumenical Movement) which aims to bring all Christians into one consolidated fellowship, and has already brought into existence a World Council of non-Roman Churches (but embodying the Eastern Orthodox) embracing seventy-six Churches in twenty-eight countries and in five continents, really derives from the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. Though I was not present at Edinburgh I was soon drawn into the movements to which it gave birth.

My first direct personal link with the Ecumenical Movement was forged when Sir Willoughby Dickinson (later Lord Dickinson) asked me if I could meet him, and advise him about publicity for a World Conference to be held at Copenhagen in 1922 for the promotion of International Friendship through the Churches. I gathered later that my friend Dr. Henry Aitkinson, the Secretary of the Church Peace Union of New York (one of the Andrew Carnegie Trusts) had suggested that I might be helpful to Sir Willoughby, who was the honorary secretary of the British Council of the World Alliance. When we met Sir Willoughby introduced me to the Treasurer of the British Council, Mr. Stafford Cripps, a young barrister with a strikingly attractive personality. The upshot of our talk that day was that I undertook to edit "Goodwill," the organ of the British Council, and to take charge of the publicity arrangements for the Copenhagen Conference. During the four years of war (1914-1918) the

embryo World Alliance went into cold storage; but with the Armistice in 1918 steps were taken to give it definite shape. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Randall Davidson, assumed the world presidency, and the Bishop of Winchester (Dr. Talbot) became President of the British Council. The Management Committee held two meetings on the Continent. National Councils had been created in nearly thirty countries when the first International Council was summoned to meet at Copenhagen. The National Councils formed on the European continent achieved one noteworthy end—they brought together religious leaders in the different countries who had never co-operated previously in any form of activity. Until the sectional leaders met on World Alliance Committees and platforms, some of them had never even seen each other, or exchanged courtesies.

The Copenhagen Conference opened the channels of Christian understanding, sympathy, and goodwill. To me the sessions were a memorable experience. The babel of tongues, the strange costumes, the varied types of faces—all lent a peculiar interest to the proceedings. One delegate who drew all men unto him at Copenhagen was Dr. Nathan Söderblom, then Archbishop of Upsala. If ever there was a "good European" it was Dr. Söderblom. During the 1914-1918 war he was accused by Germans of being pro-British: in England he was suspected of being pro-German. In reality he was a sound neutral, as, being Archbishop of Sweden (which was not engaged in the war) it was his bounden duty to be. After the war Dr. Söderblom used all his influence for the healing of national estrangements, and for the restoration of goodwill. He journeyed, by aeroplane, all over Europe. With all the European languages at his command, he spoke in the native tongue of each nation as he crossed its frontier. I met him on many occasions after the Copenhagen Conference, at Stockholm, Zürich, Lausanne, Geneva, and Mürren, and the more I saw of him the more I admired his high character and winsome qualities.

Among other leaders of religious thought and life who gathered at Copenhagen were Dr. Nehemiah Boynton, who presided, a man with "every virtue, every grace." Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, who preached the sermon which, literally, was heard around

the world; Dr. Julius Richter, a charming old scholar who knew more about missions all over the world than any other living man; Professor Adolf Deissmann, the famous New Testament scholar who died, broken hearted, when Hitlerism snatched supreme power in Germany; Professor Wilfred Monod, the French Protestant leader and preacher at L'Oratoire in Paris; Dr. J. H. Jowett, at the height of his world fame as a preacher; and Dr. Moore Ede, then Dean of Worcester, a Hulsean Lecturer, a large-hearted man who was a social reformer long before the Christian Churches concerned themselves much with such matters.

The most memorable episode at the Copenhagen Conference arose over a resolution on disarmament. Dr. Deissmann (Berlin) and Dr. Wilfred Monod (Paris) clashed so violently that it seemed almost possible that the Conference would collapse. Dr. Deissmann affirmed that Germans *had* disarmed—there were, he said, fewer soldiers to be seen in Berlin than in Copenhagen: Dr. Wilfred Monod would not believe in the genuineness of German disarmament, or in Germany's intention to disarm. The Conference atmosphere became heated. The chairman's bell, calling for order, went unheeded. While confusion was raging, and the air was still electric, Mr Stafford Cripps came and asked me to get Dr. Jowett to intervene with an appeal to the delegates to exercise the spirit of goodwill. I hesitated, but Mr. Stafford Cripps, deeply concerned because no English voice had been heard in the fiery discussion, pressed me to approach Dr. Jowett, whom I knew intimately. As I expected, Dr. Jowett, who never made an extempore speech except under compulsion, flatly refused to take the plunge. I persisted, however, urging that the duty was really laid upon him. Eventually, very reluctantly, and only on condition that he was given ten minutes in which to write a short speech, he did intervene, briefly but with such powerful effect that no one present that day is likely to forget it. With consummate skill he raised the issue in dispute above mere patriotism (though that, he said, was not something to be denied, condemned, or discouraged) into that wider internationalism for which Christ lived and died. Dr. Jowett had a rare capacity for creating an "atmosphere," and he exercised it to the full that



day. He seemed to still the stormy waters by a word. The tumult ceased; and the upshot was that Dr. Deissmann and Dr. Monod agreed to meet, with Dr. Hull, an American Quaker, presiding, as a sub-committee to draft a new resolution on disarmament. At the next session their agreed resolution was carried by the Conference without a dissentient vote, and, as a fitting climax, with Dr. Deissmann and Dr. Monod standing grasping each other's hands across the table. Dr. Jowett deserved all the credit he received for his memorable intervention: but, as I have said, the initiative came from Mr. Stafford Cripps.

The leading place that Stafford Cripps has taken in world affairs does not surprise me. He combines a brilliant brain with a splendid character. The austerity in living that he enjoined us to accept during the war is his own normal manner of life. He eats the simplest of foods, and no meat at all. He is a total abstainer, and smokes the plebeian pipe. His home life at Cricklade in Gloucester is simple, almost spartan. Almost his only extravagance is to send the promising sons of other—and poorer—men to the Universities. Before distinguishing himself as a lawyer, he had won distinction as a scientist, and also as an administrator by his management during the first great war of a vast explosive factory. It is perhaps natural that a nephew of Mrs. Sidney Webb should have become a Socialist, but he has always stood out boldly for the elementary Christian proposition that "human life and not property must be the first consideration of any wise legislature." It was Mr. Stanley Baldwin who, when Sir Stafford Cripps took his seat in the House of Commons said, "Here comes a future Prime Minister of England."

Among the many inspiring personalities with whom I have been brought into close association I give a very high place to Dr. Hubert Burge, at one time Headmaster of Winchester and, in turn, Bishop of Southwark and of Oxford. Dr. Burge, whom I met first at the Copenhagen Conference, was one of those men who make you feel that you must be at your best in his presence. He made the suggestion that the British Council of the World Alliance (which had been a body of peace-seeking men and women drawn from all the Churches, but more or less self-elected) should be reconstituted on a representative basis. Out of

this suggestion by Dr. Burge there came into existence the first association in Britain composed of members officially selected (on a ratio basis) by the Church of England, and by the Unions and Conferences of the Free Churches. The constitution was drafted by a small committee of whom Mr. (now Sir) Stafford Cripps was one. Sir Willoughby Dickinson was another. Dr. Burge entertained us at Cuddesdon Palace, and presided at our meetings. His simplicity and graciousness are something I can never forget. He was also a strong and prescient chairman, who allowed no time to be wasted on non-essentials. Later, a larger Committee met at Parmoor, with Lord Parmoor as host, to revise our draft of the Constitution, and expand its scope to include the Scottish Churches. I am sure Sir Stafford Cripps would be the first to say that Bishop Burge when headmaster at Winchester was a potent influence in shaping his mind and character. Their relations were affectionate, even tender. On Dr. Burge's untimely death, Sir Stafford Cripps established, and endowed, an annual Burge Memorial Lecture. I keep very few letters, but I treasure one from Dr. Burge, in which he wrote: "I have just heard that the increasing claims on your time and attention owing to the work you are doing on 'The Christian World' make it impossible for you to carry on the editorship of 'Goodwill,' [the Quarterly Magazine of the World Alliance] and the Press Bureau. Do let me say how much I have appreciated the devoted work you have done. In whatever way that work may grow in the future, we shall always remember that you 'planted' and what you planted was courageous and sincere, loyal to high ideals and the spiritual values of life, and we can never forget what we owe you. I have valued, too, as you know, the happy opportunity which brought us into touch with one another and gave me your friendship which I shall always prize."

Bishop Burge had a happy sense of humour. I told him a story in which he figured, but which he had not heard, and which he enjoyed immensely. Mr. R. H. Tawney, then a don at Balliol, joined up as a private in the Great War and (refusing a commission) had reached sergeant's rank when he was so severely wounded that for a time he was on the danger list. When sufficiently recovered to be moved he was brought to a hospital in

the South of England. As his nurse he had an explosive Irish girl, who scolded him in severe terms for his little breaches of regulations, such as dropping his tobacco ash on his bed quilt. One day the nurse was asked to take the Bishop of Oxford (who had come to visit his friend) to Sergeant Tawney's bedside. The two men greeted each other as affectionate old friends, and as the Bishop sat on the side of the bed they engaged in intimate conversation. As a meal time approached the nurse told the Bishop that the visiting time was over, and led him out of the ward. As soon as she had closed the door behind the Bishop the nurse rushed to Sergeant Tawney's bed in a furious rage, and with her face flushed with anger she shook her fist at him exclaiming, "Why the devil didn't you tell me before that you were a gentleman?"

The Bishop responded by telling me a delicious story of two chaplains, a Roman Catholic, and an Ulster Presbyterian, who, by some mischance, had to share a dug-out in France. They scrapped and argued violently for a while, but ultimately settled down together. Then the Presbyterian chaplain was ordered down the line with his regiment, and the two men bade farewell. The Presbyterian, addressing the Roman Catholic, said, "Now that the time has come for us to part, Padre, I'm sorry to leave you. We didn't hit it off very well together at first, but we've got to understand one another. I think we both realize now that we are each of us doing the Lord's work, you in your way and I in His."

The sessions of the Copenhagen Conference were arranged so as to permit the delegates to see something of Danish life and work. I took full advantage of these opportunities. Especially I made inquiries about the Danish Adult School education system (Folk Schools) set up a century ago by Grundtvig, an open-minded Danish clergyman, and maintained, I believe, until the Nazis overran Denmark. To these evening Folk Schools, farmers and farm workers in the rural districts went for classes and lectures on science, literature, and the liberal arts, and, in some cases, but not generally, on vocational subjects. Danes were as well educated as Scotsmen. Before the war (i.e. in 1939) Denmark, with a population of about three and a half millions, had sixty

adult colleges with 6,773 students, largely farmers and small-holders studying history, literature, and similar subjects—a proportion (according to Sir Richard Livingstone) far exceeding that in Sweden, Norway, and England.

The main Denmark industries were pig, egg and butter production. By a semi-socialistic system the government acted as distributor of farm feeding-stuffs, and the products of the farms—relieving the farmer of all the cares of transport and marketing. The farms are small-holdings, with inheritance laws designed to keep land within the families of the farmers. Denmark seemed to me a smiling land with a happy people, in safe possession of their farms. One day I made the short excursion to Elsinore. Walking on the walls of the castle (Hamlet's castle) I met Mr. John R. Clynes, the English Labour M.P. and Home Secretary in the first Labour Government. I knew him slightly, and we discussed our impressions of Denmark. "Have you," I asked him, "ever seen a contented working class anywhere but in Denmark?" He replied that he did not think he had, adding that if the Danes were not contented with their economic conditions they really ought to be ashamed of themselves. They had everything conducive to happiness. One of the tragedies of the second great war is that Hitler should have stamped his cloven hoof on a country and a people that had won the basis of happiness and well-being by their own assiduous labours, and by unremitting efforts for their own educational advancement.

Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, who preached the inaugural sermon at the Copenhagen Conference of the World Alliance for Promoting Friendship through the Churches, was a shy, retiring man, austere in appearance, a New England Puritan in outlook: but a very charming and affectionate man when once his rather chilly reserve had been penetrated. No sermon, I imagine, preached in our time ever had such wide international publicity as that on the Spirit of Christ which he preached in Roskilde Cathedral. It was translated into about twenty languages, and sent by delegates at Copenhagen to the religious newspapers in the twenty-four countries they represented, and the editors generously found space for a sermon well worthy of a very great occasion.

Before going on to Copenhagen, Dr. Jefferson preached for seven Sundays at the City Temple in London, captivating his hearers by the simplicity and felicity of his diction, and the elevation of his thought. What to me, at least, was a delightful friendship grew up between us during his visit to England. One day he came to see me at my office and said that he wanted to see some English cricket—"your summer ball-game," he called it, until I protested half-seriously, that cricket is more of a sacrament than a game, and than an American going to Lord's or Kennington Oval to see a cricket match ought to take off his shoes, as he would be on holy ground. The upshot was that I got a member of the Surrey Cricket Club to take Dr. Jefferson into the Pavilion at the Oval. But the secretary of the Surrey C.C. insisted that so distinguished an American must be the guest of the Club itself. So Dr. Jefferson went to the "Champion County v. The Rest" match with a permit covering all the days that the match might take. One of my colleagues accompanied Dr. Jefferson on the opening day—Saturday—and initiated him into the mysteries and niceties of the English game. After an initial hour of bewilderment Dr. Jefferson fell captive to cricket. What fascinated him was the quiet ritual of the game, and the impartiality of the spectators who—unlike American base-ball crowds—applauded any piece of good play by either side. He went to the Oval every day during this end-of-the-season match which ran into a fourth day—and was a confirmed cricket fan for the period of his visit to England. We corresponded regularly, if not frequently, and on my last visit to the United States I was his guest in New York, and received a most hospitable welcome in Dr. Jefferson's apartments on the edge of Central Park. A more gracious host could not be imagined, though Dr. Jefferson rarely entertained anyone, and had the reputation in New York of isolating himself even from his ministerial *confrères*. No one, I was told, was in such demand for University sermons as Dr. Jefferson. At one time or another, he preached at every University between the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts. It is one of my most happy memories to have known, understood, and appreciated Dr. Jefferson.

## TWO WORLD CONFERENCES

*Ecumenical Conference at Stockholm—The Care-free Swedes—Through the Gotha Canal—A Bishop who was not impressed—A storm about evening dress—Sir William J. Ashley—The Lambeth Appeal for Church Unity—Disappointing “conversations”—The Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order—Why it failed—Dr. A. G. Garvie—Bishop Gore closed*

THE second World Conference on Christian Life and Work was held at Stockholm, where everyone, from the King to his humblest subject, was in a mood of lavish hospitality. Nothing was left undone to facilitate the work of the Conference. Dr. Nathan Söderblom, Archbishop of Upsala, was a host in himself, with tireless energy and inexhaustible patience. The Crown Prince attended nearly every session of the Conference, along with one of his daughters, and he entertained in his modest palace several of the delegates. King Gustav gave a great reception to the delegates in his palace, and addressed them in a magnificent hall.

The proceedings of the Conference were marked by singular harmony. The spirit of unity prevailed. The Pope sent two Roman Catholic observers to report the proceedings to his Holiness. A large delegation of German Protestants accepted invitations, but they stood a little aloof from the rest of the world delegates. They sat together in a solid *bloc*, and, especially on the question of war, seemed to take the view that the Christian Church ought not to concern itself directly with affairs of state. These were the preserve of politicians. Socially the Germans were friendly: but this gulf was fixed, and to the primary purpose of the Conference—the application of Christian principles to political, social and economic issues—the German contribution was halting and unhelpful.

The journalists of Stockholm invited the journalists attending the Life and Work Conference to a banquet, and entertained us royally. I was rather astonished to find that I had been placed next to the Chairman, who was the editor of a Stockholm daily

paper, the Swedish equivalent to our London "Times." He knew my name, greeted me with marked cordiality, and told me he had asked for me to be placed next to him because he wanted to tell me how much he owed to "The Christian World." I expressed surprise and pleasure. "I learned my English," he said (and he spoke English fluently and without any foreign accent) "through reading 'The Christian World' when I was a small boy. My father was the captain of a steamship which made several voyages a year between Gothenburg and London, and he always brought home with him 'The Christian World' and 'Good Words.' With his help my sister and I picked up enough English to read your paper and 'Good Words' carefully and regularly. To some extent we were both educated, politically, by 'The Christian World' and my own warm interest in English affairs and my admiration for your democratic system of government date from those early days." It was a tribute to my paper that I have never forgotten.

Dr. Moore Ede (the Dean of Worcester), Mrs. Ede, their grandson Christopher, and I made the delectable trip through the Gotha Canal from Stockholm to Gothenburg and it was one of the most delightful travel experiences I have ever had. Dr. Moore Ede and I had been on the Gotha Canal steamer for some hours before we discovered that one of our fellow voyagers was an American Methodist Bishop who had also been at the Stockholm Conference on Life and Work. The Dean, most sociable of men, spoke to the Bishop, and later, introduced me. We talked about the Conference and compared notes about our impressions. The American Bishop said no one had impressed him at the Conference. "Not Dr. Söderblom?" I asked. "No, I was not impressed by him. But I have never yet met anybody who has deeply impressed me, or made me feel that I was in the presence of my superior." I gasped, and observed that I was a talkative man, but there were two scholars in whose presence I should have been struck dumb. The Bishop asked me who the two were. "Professor Mommsen and Lord Acton," I replied. "I've never even heard of either of them," was the American Bishop's final rejoinder. And I felt there was nothing left to be said.

The Stockholm Conference was not without its humorous phases. One of the leading American delegates, Dr. A. J. Brown, hearing that the Crown Prince of Sweden had offered hospitality to some members of the Conference, insisted that he should be one of the guests at the royal palace. He was conceded the high privilege, and when the Crown Prince attended a session (and he was present with his daughter at several) Dr. Brown danced attendance upon him—following in the Royal train with lackey-like fidelity. Americans, it was quoted, dearly love a Lord, but Dr. Brown demonstrated that one American, at least, fell abject before a Prince. Even King Gustav's reception to the delegates had a humorous side. The decree went forth that delegates attending the reception were to wear court dress, i.e. an evening dress suit. The decree caused consternation. Very few of the delegates had brought evening clothes. A few of the Americans had dinner jackets, but they were told that "Tuxedos" would not pass muster. An *impasse* threatened, until Sir William Ashley, the English political economist, calmly announced that he was going to present himself at the palace wearing a dark grey jacket suit. Other delegates declared that they would follow Sir William's lead. A message to this effect reached King Gustav, who saved the situation by sending word that delegates might wear whatever clothes they liked. The reception was informal, but the King made us all feel that we were really welcome. The refreshments were on a lavish scale. One of the Stockholm papers said next day that the delegates to the Christian Life and Work Conference had emptied the Royal wine cellars. But this was only a newspaper jest.

An acquaintance made by me at Stockholm with Sir William Ashley ripened into a friendship which I prized. I had known Sir William only as the author of some formidable books on political economy—then said to be heart-breakers for undergraduates sitting for degrees in the "dismal science." But there was nothing formidable about Sir William himself. He attracted me by his modesty and kindness, and by his essential religiousness. He had been brought up, he told me, under C. H. Spurgeon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and though when at the University (to which he won his own way) he became a



churchman of the broad Evangelical type, he liked to feel that he still had a foot in Nonconformity. Sir William, just about the time I came to know him, had presented his report on an Agricultural inquiry which he had been officially commissioned to make. The report, I suppose, reposes in some dusty Government pigeon-hole. Sir William gave me a copy and I studied it carefully. His inquiries about agriculture had been on a world-wide scale, and he reached the reasoned conclusion that a world shortage of food was inevitable in a few decades if it was not averted by international co-operation. The war has proved the correctness of Sir William's prophecy, and the international collaboration he suggested is now in the very forefront of the schemes for world reconstruction.

The appeal for unity issued by the Lambeth Conference of Bishops in 1920 started a new epoch in Church relations in England, even though it has been followed by twenty-five years of doubt and hesitation in the negotiations for constituting a reunited Church on broad comprehensive lines. The words in which the historic overture was phrased ought not to be forgotten. "The vision that rises before us is that of a Church, genuinely Catholic, loyal to all truth, and gathering into its fellowship all who profess and call themselves Christians, within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order, bequeathed as a heritage from the past to the present, shall be possessed in common, and made serviceable to the whole Body of Christ. Within this unity Christian communions now separated from one another would retain much that has long been distinctive in their methods of worship and service. It is through a rich diversity of life and devotion that the unity of the whole fellowship will be fulfilled."

The ecclesiastical climate changed with the issue of this stirring appeal. Nonconformists were deeply moved by the generosity of the approach. I was staying in a country cottage at Friday Street, just under Leith Hill, when the "call" was published and nearby Dr. Scott Lidgett, the well-known Free Church leader, was holiday-making in the same valley. We discussed the appeal. I thought it was the most remarkable bid for reunion since 1662. Dr. Lidgett, always cautious, recognized

freely that it was an event of tremendous importance in Church History. Alas! the vision of unity faded speedily. "Conversations" at Lambeth Palace between Anglican Bishops and Free Church leaders dragged on interminably. There was Anglican reluctance to recognize the validity of Free Church ministries and an insistence upon Episcopacy as the method of government in the reunited Church. The question of the reordination of Free Church ministers was another contested issue. A compromise was reached. As Dr. A. E. Garvie put it, "The Nonconformists conceded that the constitution of the United Church must be Episcopal, and the Anglicans that Presbyterian and Congregational principles shall similarly have a recognized place in it." The most notable outcome of the Conversations was a resolution passed by the Anglican representatives admitting that the Free Churches have a ministry and sacraments within the one Church of Christ. Qualifying this resolution was an insistence by the Episcopalians that the Free Church ministry is irregular, and should be regularized by episcopal ordination, though this regularization involved no repudiation by the reordained Free Church minister of his previous ordination. It was on this rock that the Conversations broke. An *impasse* was reached, and the Conversations were suspended *sine die*.

The Lambeth Conference of Bishops met again in 1930—ten years after the call to unity had been issued. By this time the Bishops had either recanted, or reached the conclusion that unity was not, after all, so essential as they had believed in 1920. The reunion question was not even put on the agenda: it was tucked away in an appendix. I confess that my hopes fell, and did not rise again when "Conversations" at Lambeth were resumed—only to be suspended again with the outbreak of war in 1939. No further progress had been made towards visible unity. I was not surprised, in examining the papers of Dr. J. D. Jones (an ardent reunionist and a recognized Free Church leader) when I was preparing his "Memoir," to find a letter dated February 15, 1938 saying (after he had been with the Bishops at Lambeth): "I feel these meetings are a waste of time. I do not see anything coming out of them." But if the dreams of reunion are fading away, active collaboration between

Anglicans and Free Churchmen—without any insistence that denominational differences must be resolved before common action can be undertaken—is growing all over England. Archbishop Lord Lang has truly said that the change of attitude from the old isolationism to the present spirit of co-operation can only be described by the word revolutionary. Lord Quickswood said the wise word when he wrote, in a letter to "The Times" on January 26, 1944: "Let us cherish and strengthen the union of love, and out of it may grow true agreement: but while we disagree let us remain organized apart."

I began my own life in an old industrial town where sectarian antagonisms were bitter, and co-operation between Christians of varying denominations was outside the range of possibility. I am ending my life in a quiet Surrey village where between the Anglican, Baptist, and Congregational Churches there is a genuine fellowship and community of spirit—without any surrender of principles. With such an augury for the future I am full of hope.

Of all the great Ecumenical Conferences that it has fallen to my lot to attend, none disappointed me so grievously as the Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne. It made a splendid beginning and yet came to an almost ignominious end. Browning's line that "what begins best cannot end worst" was contradicted at Lausanne. Why, and exactly when, the Conference took a wrong turn I cannot be sure: but there came a day when the atmosphere seemed to cool, and the Conference appeared to harden its heart. Possibly it was over-organized—everything was cut and dried. It was certainly too protracted. It covered nearly three weeks in sweltering summer heat—and it is very hot in Lausanne if it is hot at all. A large proportion of the delegates left before the Conference closed; some arrived late, and never caught its atmosphere. Then Bishop Brent, the President, upon whose sanity and sanctity so much depended, was too ill to preside at most of the sessions—he died shortly afterwards—and though Dr. A. E. Garvie stepped manfully into the breach, and by his tact and wisdom steered the Conference round some hair-pin bends, Bishop Brent's absences were acutely felt. A tactical blunder was made when, unofficially, a proposal

was canvassed outside the Conference hall for a united Communion service to be held. Unity had not got far enough for the Christian leaders at Lausanne to gather together at the Lord's Table, and the attempt to force the pace caused some heart-burnings. The extremes had met, but the common ground between them had yet to be explored. The idea of the joint Communion service was dropped, but the mere suggestion clouded the atmosphere.

After the first ten days I had a feeling that the Conference was labouring under a burden too heavy to be borne patiently to the end. A Commission presented a report on the next steps to be taken. There had been some clashes of opinion in the Commission over the phrasing of the recommendations, and it became evident in the Conference discussion that some members of the Commission were not satisfied with the report. I think the ringleaders of the revolt at the penultimate hour were Bishop Manning of New York, Bishop Craig Stewart, an American Episcopalian (formerly a Congregationalist) and Dr. Moorhouse, editor of "The Living Church" (an Anglo-Catholic organ). There was a little heated discussion in the terribly jaded Conference, and the upshot was that the report which was designed to carry on the work of the Conference was rejected. So the Lausanne Faith and Order Conference closed in an explosive atmosphere. I am quite certain that reunion will never come about through elaborate Conferences such as that held at Lausanne. The Churches may be driven into unity by the storm which has beaten upon Christianity—East and West—in the last ten years, but it will be unity without uniformity if reunion ever does come. Reunion based on uniformity would breed a new Non-conformity instantly.

Stories clustered about Dr. Garvie, who figured largely at the Conference, and was himself an incorrigible raconteur. He was quite aware that many apocryphal stories were fathered upon him, but if they were good ones he did not object to being the target for jokes against himself. One such story, baseless, no doubt, was of Dr. Garvie's lecturing to the students at New College, who were preparing for the London B.D. examination. The papers set for that examination follow certain prescribed

lines, year by year, and Dr. Garvie had no need to prepare new lectures for his students. One day, so the story goes, Dr. Garvie noticed that one of his students was taking no notes of his lecture and asked why. "I have my father's notes," replied the student.

I think it was Dr. Garvie who told me the story of a candidate for admission to a theological college who failed to satisfy the Committee that he knew his Bible. In all other respects he was an admirable young man. His application was deferred, so that he might improve his acquaintance with Holy Writ. When he presented himself again the committee were disposed to be lenient, if he showed that he knew even some elementary details—feeling that his deficiencies in Biblical knowledge would be repaired during his course in college. The Chairman of the Committee decided to ask the candidate only one question, and if the answer was satisfactory, to let it go at that. "Can you tell us anything about Saul?" was the question he put to the candidate. "Yes sir. He was one of the kings of Israel." "That's quite right, Mr. —," said the chairman. "That will do." But the candidate himself was not quite satisfied. He wanted to show that he knew more than that, and he added, "and his other name was Paul!"

Bishop Gore was one of the outstanding representatives of the Church of England at the Conference at Lausanne. I do not think that Dr. Gore was concerned to do anything to promote the reunion of the Churches, except on his own terms—absorption in the Church of England—and he seemed to play the part of a deliberate obstructionist. He spoke on every main topic, and had amendments to propose on almost all the resolutions. It became clear that his frequent interventions in the discussions were boring, and even exasperating, the Conference, and one morning the stamping of feet by the impatient delegates virtually applied the closure to his speech. I had always had a profound respect for Bishop Gore, and I certainly never thought that I should ever see the day when he would be stamped down in an important Conference. I recognized his absolute sincerity and admired his courage—the courage that led him when called upon to say the grace at a City Banquet to pray, "God forgive

us for feasting while others starve." It was said of Dr. Gore, when he was a Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, that he was so ascetic in his way of life that he took to smoking so as to have something to give up in Lent. One of Bishop Gore's witticisms was, "The post-war generation hate Browning because he made their parents what they are."

## RELIGIONS AND PEACE

*A Conference of all living Religions to promote Peace—Nansen on Disarmament of the mind—Sir Francis Younghusband—Dr. W. P. Merrill*

My friend Dr. Henry A. Atkinson, Secretary of the Church Free Union endowed by Andrew Carnegie, conceived the idea of a world wide Conference of representative men and women of all religious faiths to focus the belief that religion offers a means of establishing permanent peace on earth and goodwill among men. Dr. Atkinson is a man who takes long views, and is fertile in bold ideas. This idea of holding a World Religious Conference for peace first came to him when, in visiting Verdun, after the 1914-1918 war, he found a rough temporary chapel built as a memorial to the men of many races who had fallen on that sanguinary battlefield. A Catholic priest in charge of the chapel showed him the plans for a permanent chapel to be built in the future. These provided for four sections—one for Catholic Christians, a second for Protestant Christians, a third for Moslems, and a fourth for Jews. "If men," thought Dr. Atkinson, "can join to symbolize the sacrifices of war, why can they not join to proclaim together in words and work that war shall not happen again?" The World Peace Union authorized Dr. Atkinson to carry out this idea of a Universal Religious Peace Conference, and he encircled the world in furtherance of his plan. He found religious people in all countries eager to support it. The upshot was a preliminary Conference held in Geneva in September 1928 to formulate plans for a Conference on a grand scale.

In some respects this preliminary Conference was the most memorable of all the International Religious Conferences I have ever attended. There were present one hundred and eighty-nine delegates representing nearly every one of the world's religions—Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Confucianism, Shintoism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Bahaism, Theosophy, and Christianity

(in all its phases from Catholicism to Unitarianism). These representatives of diverse faiths met in Geneva in a spirit of fellowship and goodwill, and spent three days in discussing openly and with perfect frankness what religion can contribute towards a warless world. With unanimity it was agreed to go forward and prepare for a Universal Religious Peace Conference, and an Executive Committee was created to carry that resolve into effect. One of my abiding memories is of a session when a joint religious service, in which the representatives of practically all the living faiths in the world united in prayers, and readings from the sacred writings of the world's chief religions, compiled for the occasion by Dr. Robert E. Hume, an American missionary scholar. The solemnizing effect of that hallowing hour's service remained with me for many a day.

It may be interesting to recall the names of a few of the notable delegates to that preliminary Conference at Geneva. Dr. Atkinson, who knows everybody, or at least has means for getting at everybody, had spread his net widely and netted some big fish. Among them were C. F. Andrews, Dr. Parkes Cadman, Dr. Chen Huan Chang, Pandit J. Chandra Chatterji, the Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan, Mr. K. N. Das Gupta, Dr. S. K. Datta, Sir Willoughby Dickinson, Dionysius (the Metropolitan of Warsaw), Miss Lucy Gardner, Miss Lindaf-Hageby, the Duchess of Hamilton, Professor J. W. Hauer, Dr. J. H. Hertz (the Chief Rabbi), Dr. Adolf Keller, Sir Henry Lunn, Bishop W. F. McDowell, Dean Shailer Matthews (who presided), Dr. Wm. P. Merrill, Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, Professor Theodore Reinach, Sir E. Denison Ross, Dr. T. H. Shibata, Professor A. da Silva, Mr. H. Wickham Steed, Professor E. Tomomatsu, Sir Francis Younghusband, Mr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, and M. Marc Sangnier.

To me the outstanding figure at this Conference was Nansen, the dauntless adventurer amid the ice floes of the North Polar seas: Nansen was a genuine lover of mankind, a devoted humanitarian, and a remarkable personality. After the first world war he was the director of organizations which fed twelve million people in the famine-stricken countries of



Europe. He struck me as a simple, sincere, large-hearted and far-seeing man, with just a suggestion of the sadness which seems to be characteristic of the Norwegian people. He was typical Nordic—fair-haired, with deep blue eyes, and a far-away look in them. Being lionized in almost all the civilized countries of the world had left him unspoiled, and wholly natural. He spoke English fluently. Nansen saw a great sign of hope for the future in the fact that so many different religious leaders were thinking out what could be done to establish and safeguard universal peace by "disarmament of minds"—and by helping youth to understand what peace is, and what brotherhood is, and what it is to love your neighbour. "That," he said, "is the most critical issue for the future of mankind." One passage in Nansen's speech ran: "When we think of the history we learned in childhood it must strike many of us that the morality taught through that history was often very strange. In your religious teaching, in your ethical education, you learned that to steal, rob, and to lie were great crimes, and if you killed someone you would be put in prison and perhaps lose your own life. But if you lied, cheated, and killed for the advantage of your country was a noble thing, and you were considered a great patriot and a great man. This double moral standard must be abolished if a real betterment of the world is to be achieved, and in that direction the religious teachers of the people have a great mission indeed." Less than two years afterwards Nansen died suddenly at Oslo in his seventieth year.

Another of the prominent personalities at this Conference was Sir Francis Younghusband, with whom, later, I had very pleasant associations. Sir Francis was elected as a member of the Executive Committee charged with making arrangements for the World Religious Conference to be held in 1930, somewhere in the East. To me fell the Chairmanship of the Publicity Subcommittee, and the editorship of a volume on "The Causes of War," published by Macmillan. Sir Francis and I met year after year at the Executive Committee meetings held at Geneva, Frankfurt, and Berne. It was at Berne that we really got to know each other. Sir Francis and I were housed in the same hotel—a very quiet place with very few visitors in residence.

kill the long dull evenings my friend Paul B. Steele took me to the Rathskeller, a subterranean concert-hall where over a cup of coffee or a glass of lager beer, one could listen to a small but excellent orchestra, and talk when the music ceased. The atmosphere of the place was homely and friendly. When I told Sir Francis Younghusband, who had spent two tedious evenings in the hotel lounge, about the Rathskeller he asked leave to join our little party, and very good company he proved. When I was leaving Berne for London, Sir Francis came over to the table where I was breakfasting. "Is there a Rathskeller in Lucerne?" he asked. He was going on to the Bernese Oberland, staying a few days, *en route*, at Lucerne. I did not think there was, but I told him that the lounge of the Schweizerhof would serve the same end in Lucerne as the Rathskeller in Berne.

Sir Francis apparently felt it incumbent upon himself to give the Conference an apologia, as an ex-military officer, for being ardently interested in peace, and especially peace through religion. "I was a military officer, it is true," he told the Geneva Conference, "But for years I was employed on the Indian frontier in the political or diplomatic work of keeping peace among impulsive and warlike people. I had to be acutely sensitive to the feelings of those among whom I worked. I had to arouse no unnecessary animosity, and to cultivate, if possible, the friendship of those about me. And I soon realized that what those frontier people—like most Asiatics—care most about, what they feel most about, is their religion. Respect their religion—be interested in their religion—and respect your own religion, and you will have a true foundation for peace." This North-West Frontier experience taught Sir Francis the practical value of religion for the preservation of peace. He was himself something of a mystic, and the mysticism of the East coloured his own faith. I never met anyone who had achieved so much, and said so little of his own achievements. But he was always ready to talk about mountaineering—especially in the Himalayas, where he climbed with Achille Ratti (the late Pope—then a simple priest) as his companion. He was the very quintessence of courtesy, though he barked his kindnesses at you in the sharp, short, clipped manner of an old military man. And for any little

service you might render him his appreciation was almost overwhelming.

At one of the annual committee meetings of the World Religious Conference, Don Salvador de Madariaga—a citizen of the world if ever there was one—spoke on internationalism, and almost electrified his little group of hearers. The Spanish Professor has a brain as keen as a razor's edge, and his knowledge is encyclopaedic. He spoke in English—the English of an Oxford or Cambridge man—and though speaking extemporaneously every word he used seemed to be the exact and only word to express his meaning. He prepared an essay for the book on "The Causes of War," which I edited, but at the last moment he had to withdraw his contribution, on his appointment to a Spanish Government office which naturally precluded him from what might have been regarded as propagandist activities.

The Universal Religious Conference for Peace was never held. The first date fixed (1930) was found to be too early, and then the economic blizzard swept the world, and after that Hitlerism raised its horned head. The machinery still exists, and it may yet be that on the foundations laid at Geneva in 1928, there may some day be held a Conference—such as the Bishop of Chichester (Dr. G. K. A. Bell) recently suggested—representative of the great world religions, Christian and non-Christian, "to discuss the common task of reviving spiritual belief and kindly dealing among nations."

One point which was brought home to me in these World Peace Conferences is the essential distinction between the Oriental and Occidental religions. Dr. W. P. Merrill, the eminent Presbyterian Minister in New York, who presided over one of the Commissions, defined the distinction in a beautiful passage, "You who are of the East," he said, "may feel, perhaps, more deeply than we do, the mystical beauty of bowing down in adoration before the holy and perfect will of God; and we in the West may feel, perhaps, more intensely than you do, the glory of going out to see that this Will of God is done, done concretely, and in a way that people can feel and know it." When he expressed his belief that "the will of God won't be

unless we do it," Dr. Merrill seemed to be saying in vigorous prose what he wrote in his now very popular hymn:

"Rise up, O men of God.  
Have done with lesser things:  
Give heart and soul and mind and strength  
To serve the King of Kings."

Dr. Merrill, with whom I travelled from Geneva to London after one of the Conferences, combines robust practical horse-sense with strong idealism. His feet are always firmly planted on mother earth, though he speaks with a prophet's vision and a poet's diction. His personal charm makes him a delightful travelling companion. I shall never forget his solicitous considerateness for me on that long railway journey. I had picked up—possibly from drinking Geneva water—a sort of paratyphoid (sometimes called Geneva disease) which certainly did not make me a very companionable person on that occasion.

## TRAVEL NOTES

*Visits to the United States—Abraham Lincoln stories—The Spell of Boston—The Massachusetts House of Commons—Pictures in Boston Library—River-views at Quebec, Vienna, Buda-Pesth, Prague and Danzig*

My travels in America have been circumscribed. I have never been west of St. Louis, or south of Washington, and the new, rough, raw Chicago I saw fifty years ago—and have never seen since—was not like the Chicago of to-day, which is described as a city of fine boulevards, lake-side drives and spacious pleasancess. Washington will ever be to me the city of my dreams, perhaps because I associate it with Abraham Lincoln, my hero of heroes. The dingy little house in which Lincoln died gave me an authentic thrill—the feeling that I ought to take off my shoes because I was on holy ground. I stood with reverence beside the iron bedstead upon which Lincoln was laid, after Booth had shot him in Ford's theatre opposite, and upon which he drew his last breath. The stark simplicity of the room symbolized, almost perfectly, the character of Lincoln, that plain homely, gaunt, rough-hewn man who, when someone said he was common, replied that the Lord must love common men or he would not have made so many of them. I must have inherited my Lincoln worship from my father. I have certainly read more biographies of Lincoln than of any other man. With a friend, who was with me in Washington, I looked over the shelves of Lincoln biographies housed in the room where he died. There were over a hundred, and between us my friend (also a Lincoln devotee) and I found that we had read over fifty. Lincoln "belongs to the ages" now and, for myself, I seriously wonder whether in the last nineteen hundred years a greater man has trodden this earth.

Among my American friends I counted Dr. William E. Barton, to whose indefatigable researches we owe almost all that is known of Lincoln's early years. Dr. Barton had some of Lincoln's characteristics. He too, was angular, and he was magnanimous. He also

fought against racial prejudice, especially the colour bar. When he was the minister of a Congregational Church in a Chicago suburb, he saw a bundle lying on the sidewalk one night, and as he bent over it something inside stirred. It was a tiny black baby evidently forsaken by its mother. Dr. Barton carried it home, adopted it as one of his own large family, educated the child as his own sons were being educated, and treated the little foundling as if it were his own child—and all this was done in the face of the prevailing colour prejudice. The little negro boy grew up to be a gifted and prosperous Chicago dentist. There was an Abraham Lincoln touch about the whole episode, and Dr. Barton never made any song about his magnanimous deed.

Whilst these memories were being committed to paper, some interesting facts concerning Abraham Lincoln's English ancestry have been brought to light by Colonel John Leslie of Brancaster, Norfolk. By a happy gesture, well calculated to promote Anglo-American friendship, on the 135th anniversary of Lincoln's birthday Colonel Leslie presented to the National Trust the title deeds of the site at Swanton Morley on which, in the seventeenth century, the home of the Lincoln family stood. In 1637, seventeen years after the sailing of the "Mayflower," a Norwich weaver, Samuel Lincoln, sailed for New England. It was the period of the great Puritan migration to the North American colonies. Almost certainly, Colonel Leslie thinks, it was a "desire to worship God in his way, and not Archbishop Laud's" that led Samuel Lincoln to go to America. There he founded the American branch of the Lincoln family, from which, nearly 200 years later, Abraham Lincoln came. Two doors belonging to the original Lincoln home at Swanton Morley were saved from the scrap heap when the house was demolished in 1892, and it is hoped to embody these in the memorial to Lincoln which it is proposed to erect on the historic site.

Stories about Abraham Lincoln fascinate me and my American friends keep me stocked with any new Lincolniana. Dr. Nehemiah Boynton told me this. When Lincoln was a small-town lawyer he had one client, a farmer, who wearied Lincoln by boasting about the huge crops he raised on his farm. Looking out of the office window one day, Lincoln saw this client approaching, and

was ready for him. As soon as the farmer was seated Lincoln said "We've been harvesting our crop this week." "What! Are you farming, Abe?" "Just hay." "Got a good crop?" "Mighty fine." "How much to the acre?" "Well," drawled Lincoln, "I couldn't figure it out that way, but I told my men to stack as much of it as they could in the open air, and put the rest in the barns."

Another Lincoln story I owe to the Rev. Edward Boynton. Lincoln was recalling his boyhood to some of his intimates. He said his school was just a log cabin, and that as his father and mother could not afford any school fees he earned his schooling by doing chores (chopping wood, carrying water, etc.) for the schoolmaster. They had no books except the Bible to read out of, so they took turns in reading a verse each out of a Bible chapter. If a boy stumbled over a word in reading his verse the schoolmaster rapped his head with his knuckles, and rapped sharply too. One day when they were reading round, a small boy standing next to Lincoln shied at the names Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the Old Testament story. Sharply the knuckles fell on his head, and he cried. The reading continued, and in a little while the boy began to whimper again. "What are you crying about now?" Lincoln asked. "I've been counting up the verses," the whimpering youngster answered, "and them three derved, miserable cusses is coming round to me again." Lincoln was invited to give a talk to the lawyers in the Springfield district where he had practised. He took "the re-examination of witnesses in a law court" as his subject, and stressed the pitfalls of re-examination, especially of a good witness. As an instance he said that after a *fracas* in a Southern state a coloured man was charged with biting another coloured man's ear off. There was one excellent witness for the defendant—a white man—who had seen the fight from first to last, and swore that he did not see the defendant bite off the complainant's ear. His evidence stood firm under cross-examination, and the case for the defence was going well. But the defendant's lawyer re-examined his own witness. "You have told us," he said to the man on the witness stand, "that you did not see the defendant bite off the plaintiff's ear. Now perhaps you would like to tell the court what you *did* see." The witness's shattering answer was, "Well, I saw him spitting out an ear."

Ever present in my mind, during the terrible war years, has been that letter written from the White House by Abraham Lincoln to a mother who had lost both her sons in the American Civil War—the letter in which Lincoln, having expressed his sympathy, prayed that the sense of pain and sorrow the bereaved mother was feeling might in time give place to a sense of holy pride in having laid so costly a sacrifice on the altar of human liberty.

Second only to Washington in my affection comes Boston, perhaps because it is the American city I know best, and the city where the dearest of my American friends lived. Possibly the fact that Boston is the most English of American cities appeals to my British insularity. You cannot be in Boston long without some proud citizen telling you "Boston is not really a city: it is a state of mind." There is some truth behind that boast. Boston is a city of the mind—an intellectual metropolis. Some wit—I think Mark Twain—once said that respectability stalks unashamed in the streets of Boston. Dr. John Watson ("Ian Maclaren") came back from America telling a story of two schoolgirls who came upon an old milestone registering in time-worn letters the words "I.M. from Boston." "How quaint," remarked one girl. "But how sufficient!" responded the other girl. "*I'm from Boston.*"

Boston's pre-eminence is nevertheless challenged nowadays in America. Westward the march of culture (like the march of Empire) takes its way, and all the forty-eight states in the Union have now their own Universities. So Boston, as the citadel of American scholarship, literature, and art—the home-base of the Concord School—has lost much of its former pre-eminence. Vachel Lindsay—since Walt Whitman the most vibrant and prophetic of American poets—even refers to New Englanders as "that inbred Plymouth stock." But, with all this, Boston retains its fascination, especially for an English Congregationalist who remembers that "Independents" were first called Congregationalists in Boston, and that they ruled the city for a century. That may be small comfort to a Congregationalist visiting Boston to-day who discovers that Boston is now a Roman Catholic stronghold largely dominated by the Irish and Italians.

Sufficient of the old historic Boston survives to capture one's



agination. The Bunker Hill monument commemorates a British humiliation on the battle-field. When Dr. William Robertson Nicoll and J. M. Barrie were in Boston they were, of course, taken to Bunker Hill, where to the horror of theiricerone Barrie drawled out the question "Nicoll, who *was* Bunker?" With the filling-in of the "Back Bays" Griffen's Wharf, where lay the British ships raided by the Boston Tea Party that threw overboard 342 taxed chests of tea, and "made the world ring with the patriotic exploit" (which is how an inscription on the site records that event) has disappeared. It is now a built-up area. I sought vainly for the spot. But one night a hospitable banker from Kansas took a party, of whom I was one, for a fish-fry supper in a cellar near where the old Tea Party Wharf once was, and besides pointing out the site gave us a rare and unforgettable experience of perfectly delicious food, exquisitely cooked, but served in a rough and tumble fashion and amid ear-cracking noise. Our good-natured host egged us on to eat one fish course after another till (like the Scotsman arriving late for a "Burns nicht" dinner, and catching a sniff of the haggis) we murmured "Ah, but we'll be bad the morn." But we were not. That Lucullan feast is quite a happy memory.

The Massachusetts House of Commons, which meets in the State House at Boston, is second only to the British House of Commons in age, and Bostonians are proud of the historical significance of that fact. But it has created precedents of its own, and customs alien to the British House. My good friend Mr. Bridgman, then the Clerk of the House, procured me the privilege of a seat on the Speaker's dais when the House was sitting, and the Speaker introduced me to the members in a little biographical speech of very embarrassing eulogy. I certainly did not recognize my portrait as the Speaker painted it, and I am sure none of my friends would have done so either. It reminded me of a story of an American minister who was giving a funeral oration. The "late lamented" had been a sorry rascal, a brutal husband, and a cruel father: but the minister, once he got into his oratorical stride, forgot all that and began to draw upon an address he had recently given at the funeral of a much-beloved and worthy deacon. The widow heard the lavish eulogies of her husband in sheer

bewilderment, until she could stand it no longer. "Junior," she whispered to her little son, "just go and peep in the casket and see if it is pa he's talking about."

The Parliament Chamber at Boston, unlike the British House of Commons, is a large auditorium with seats arranged in a horse-shoe formation and each member is allotted a chair with a desk before it. The easy, almost conversational style of speech which the English House of Commons encourages is almost impossible in the Boston "House," which seems designed to encourage rhetoric. Having seen what the Boston Chamber looks like when half empty, and having heard the almost stentorian tones in which Massachusetts M.P.s had to address the House, I share Mr. Winston Churchill's view that the British House of Commons ought to be rebuilt on the same scale and plan as the House that was destroyed by the Luftwaffe. Boston has spots steeped in history, though the record of the city covers only three centuries. One night during my very short visit in 1928 I found myself billed to speak in Park Street Church. Park Street has a story of its own. It was the first Trinitarian Church built after the old Puritan Churches of Boston had become Unitarian. Its orthodox traditions are so adamant that it is still sometimes called "Brimstone Corner." Inwardly I questioned whether my orthodoxy would stand the Park Street Church tests, and I wondered whether I might not be indicted for entering its portals under false pretences. But nothing so untoward happened. What moved my feelings that night was the recollection that it was in the old Park Street Church that the revolutionary national anthem "America" was first publicly sung, and that one of the earliest of William Lloyd Garrison's great speeches on liberty was delivered within its walls. The "Liberator" is commemorated by a lovely statue on Boston Common, bearing the inscription "Liberty, whether in laurels or chains, knows nothing but victories"—a battle cry for liberty appropriate for our own war-torn age.

Boston statues put London statues to shame. There is a charming statue of Sir Harry Vane (Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636-37) in Boston Library, and outside Trinity Church in Copley Square, where he "preached to the whole Christian world," there is a statue of Bishop Phillips Brooks,

by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, which held me captive every day that I passed it during a fortnight's sojourn in Boston in 1920. Saint-Gaudens—best known in England for his statue of Lincoln at Manchester—represents Phillips Brooks standing in his pulpit with the hand of a hooded Jesus on his shoulder—symbolizing of course, the inspirer of the great preacher's message to his age. Three great artists—Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (French), Edwin Abbey (English), and John Sargent (American)—have between them made Boston Library a perennial source of joy to art lovers. Chavannes' mural decorations of the main staircase have all the distinctive marks of his genius, Edwin Abbey's paintings of the Arthurian legends adorn the walls of the room where books are distributed to their borrowers. But it is the Sargent pictures that give glory to the Library. They are a monument to the artist's thirty years' labour. The frieze portraying the Old Testament prophets has been sent, in reproduction, all over the world. Sargent's purpose, nobly achieved, was to tell the story of the evolution of religion through all its phases from Paganism to Christianity. Two of the Sargent paintings which fascinated me, but have exasperated many other people (some of whom have shewn their detestation by splashing ink on them) represent "The Church" and "The Synagogue." In both pictures, I think, Sargent tried to show where Judaism and Christianity (in one of its forms) have gone astray. "The Synagogue" represents a woman, once beautiful, but now old, blind, and haggard, wearing a crown all awry, seated amid a ruin of broken pillars and falling curtains, but clutching tightly to her bosom the stone tablets of the law and two broken pieces of a sceptre. "The Church" is a picture capable of various interpretations. It presents a beautiful young woman robed in pale blue with a hood over her head and a phylactery round her brow. She sits on a throne, and gazes with rapt eyes, out of the picture, into the far beyond. In one outstretched hand she holds the wafer, in the other the chalice, and between them stretches a white napkin so arranged by the artist, I think, as to obscure from her view the thorn-crowned Jesus at her feet, clothed in robes of the same colour as her own robe, so that He is almost invisible. As I interpret this painting Sargent clearly intended to tell the Church that her mission would fail,

as the Synagogue has failed, if by over-emphasis on sacramentalism the Jesus of history is left obscure.

I must confess that if I were not an Englishman by birth and every impulse in my soul, I would choose to be a Bostonian, with my home in (say) Newton Centre.

The city of cities for me in Canada is Quebec—first, foremost, and all the time. I love its somnolent, happy-go-lucky, never-do-anything-to-day-that-you-can-put-off-until-the-day-after-to-morrow atmosphere. Possibly this “always afternoon” mood has gone since I was last in Quebec in 1920, but devoutly I hope not. It was the essence of its charm to me, fresh from the feverish rush of American cities. But one thing cannot, happily, have changed—that gorgeous river-view down the St. Lawrence seen from the terraces of the Chateau Frontenac, the most finely situated hotel I know. In visions I have seen myself spending a week, armed with a plentiful supply of tobacco, viewing the landscape from those bewitching terraces. The dream has never been realized, and never will be now: but my heart beats just a little faster whenever I think of Old Quebec, the Heights of Abraham, and that panorama of mountain, river, and plain as seen from the Chateau Frontenac. Earth has nothing fairer to offer.

Love of river-views in cities has often tempted me to gauge my appreciation of any Continental city by its river scene. Lisbon gripped my heart just because it stands so majestically over the Tagus. Lovely as Vienna is—though when I saw it ten years ago its beauty was sadly faded—it owes little of its glamour to the Danube, a chocolate coloured stream and certainly not the “Blue Danube” of Strauss’s bewitching waltz. The river-view at Buda-Pesth surpasses all that one had heard of its splendour. But even the river-views in Buda-Pesth were quite subordinate in their interest for me to the gypsy bands playing in the side streets—little orchestras of eight or ten instrumentalists, maestros all of them. They played Johann Strauss’s waltzes divinely. I was listening to one of these Tzigane bands when the E string of the solo violinist snapped. The second violinist leapt to his feet, fiddle to chin, and with scarcely the loss of a note continued the solo. I thought it a wonderful feat of musicianship—and I still think so—

but the *concierge* at the hotel told me it is a familiar dodge which the gypsy musicians often use if they see someone foreign in their audience who might be moved to put silver in the collecting cap.

To return to my subject—river-views. There can be very few rivals in Europe to that wondrous scene from the Hradschin Hill at Prague, with the Moldau making its wide sweep under elegantly-designed bridges adorned by splendid statues, through a gracious city. It is a panorama of surpassing beauty. The Spree at Berlin adds nothing to a city which always displays a rawness that led the fastidious Viennese to call it Parvenuville. Dresden has a quietly charming river-view from a hillside overlooking the city. But I went to Dresden to see Raphael's Sistine Madonna, not a river-view. I made, in fact, a detour of 200 miles to see what has been acclaimed the most beautiful picture in the world. To me its loveliness is spell-binding. Some pictures, like some human beings, create an inexplicable spiritual aura all their own. Botticelli's "Nativity" is one, Rembrandt's "Night Watch" is another, so is Leonardo's "Last Supper," and also Sassoferrati's "Blue Virgin." An experience in the Dresden gallery confirms me in my theory that pictures create such an aura. From where I sat looking at the Sistine Madonna, I could see—down a long corridor flanked by small side galleries—two Japanese sailors in navy uniform strolling nonchalantly along the corridor, indulging in a little horse-play on the way. They came into the gallery through a side door, walked a few steps noisily, turned to look at the picture and then gently tiptoed to a seat near me, where for some minutes they looked at the painting in reverent silence, as if Raphael's masterpiece had overawed them. To these Orientals—Shintoists no doubt—Mary and Jesus could signify nothing, but Raphael's sublime painting of the Virgin and Child has something which subdued those jaunty Japanese sailor-boys into something like awe.

Still another river-view which captivates me, though more for its historical associations than any aesthetic appeal, is the glimpse of the turbid Vistula as it flows lazily under the bridge at Danzig. It is not a picturesque view: but at Danzig the Vistula is (as John Burns said of the Thames) liquid history. It was over

this bridge that Napoleon drove in his big white carriage to his disastrous campaign against Russia in 1812, leaving Rapp to hold Danzig as a base and to defend it, later, against a siege that ranks as one of the severest in modern history—at least until the recent sieges of Leningrad and Stalingrad. Apart from the river-view Danzig is my favourite city in Europe, and the city to which I have returned whenever an opportunity came. The old Hanseatic town is war scarred: no city has been so ruthlessly torn and tossed about by conquerors all through the centuries. But through all its vicissitudes Danzig has remained Danzig—a proud city with a rare beauty all its own. If the Langemarkt has any rival it is Princes Street, Edinburgh. Every building in the Langemarkt is dated by its gable, its design and its colour, for, in conjunction, these characteristics reveal the century in which it was built. Parallel with the Langemarkt runs the Frauengasse, where in front of every house there is a broad, elevated, flagged open verandah, iron-railed and approached from the street by stone steps. On these quaint “Beischlags” the Danzigers, in centuries gone by, entertained their friends with coffee, or drove bargains with their customers over their wine. So Danzig has an old-world air. Towering over the Frauengasse stands the frowning, massive, red brick Cathedral, while the graceful spire of the Rathaus seems to hang protectively over the Langemarkt. Both these buildings date back to Hanseatic League times when Danzig, a free city, proud and prosperous, had its own ambassadors at European courts, made treaties, waged war, and defended itself manfully against all comers. Danzig has always been a purse-proud city, self-conscious, arrogant, and flaunting its wealth and pride of place on the Baltic. Still, it had a warm corner in my heart, and during its bondage to Nazi Germany, I often turned a pitying eye on its tribulations.

## AMERICAN FRIENDS

*Dr. Nehemiah Boynton—Dr. Parkes Cadman—Dr. Lynn Harold Hough—  
Dr. Henry Van Dyke—Dr. H. Emerson Fosdick—Dr. Frank Buchman*

A SENSE of sheer desolation came over me when a letter arrived telling me of the quiet passing of Dr. Nehemiah Boynton of Boston. He was the oldest and dearest of all my American friends, and my life has been enriched by a wide circle of American friendships. Boynton exemplified all the fruits of the Christian spirit. Everything he did was done graciously. He was benign, serene, generous, chivalrous, and long-suffering, and to these virtues he added the graces of humour and joy of life. A New Englander, Boston-born and proud to have been cradled in the "Hub of the Universe," he represented all that was best in the old Puritan stock. He loved England, especially London, and particularly the National Liberal Club. He must have crossed the Atlantic twenty times, and it was always to England—to London—that he came. His friends here were legion. He was a born raconteur, and stories gathered naturally around him. His physical appearance inspired some of them—his tubby little figure, his twinkling eyes, looking out from a grave face, and his old-fashioned side-whiskers, that nothing would make him give up wearing. Always at the end of June, Dr. Boynton left Brooklyn—where he ministered for half a lifetime at Clinton Avenue Church—for a fishing holiday on his island off the Maine coast, where he fished, swam, sunbathed, and sailed his own boat. A fashionable lady from New York, yachting in Maine Coast waters, landed one day on Parson's Paradise, and being told that Dr. Boynton was somewhere on the shore, tracked him down. She found him lying on his back, a quaint, rotund figure in bathing costume. "Are you," she asked, looking down on him through her lorgnette, "the Reverend Doctor Nehemiah Boynton of Clinton Avenue Church, Brooklyn?" "No, madam, no, not after the thirtieth of June, not after the thirtieth of June," flashed

back the answer from Boynton. He spent his last summer on his beloved island, but had to confess, after pulling up a lively twenty-pound pollock caught in twenty fathoms of water, that his fishing days were gone. "These fish are too heavy for me," he said sadly to his younger son, and it must have meant the end of all things to him. During his last stay on Parson's Paradise his son-in-law visited him bringing two friends. It was a glorious day, and they found Dr. Boynton pacing slowly up and down his porch. "You have provided a very wonderful day for us here, Doctor," said one of the visitors. With a quiet twinkle in his eye Dr. Boynton replied, "To tell you the truth I didn't provide it: but a very good friend of mine did."

Another very close and dear American friend was Dr. Samuel Parkes Cadman—a man cast in a big mould, with a big physique, a big voice, a big brain, and a big heart, and above all with an affectionate nature which he lavished in friendship. Perhaps I ought not to call Parkes Cadman an American at all, though he lived in America for half a century and was an American subject. But his heart was always in England—in Shropshire, where he was born, worked in a coal-pit, acquired his amazing gift of speech as a Methodist local preacher, and laid the foundations of his wide learning by voracious reading. Bent on the Christian ministry he went to Richmond College, was drafted into a Methodist circuit as a probationer, and then upset his own apple-cart by defying the Methodist rule which forbids probationary ministers to marry. When he was "disciplined" for breaking the regulations, he set out for America, became a Congregationalist (such a transfer from one denomination to another is easy and common in the U.S.A.) and ministered to the largest Congregational Church in the world (Central Church, Brooklyn). America recognized his quality and gave him a high place in its religious life. When broadcasting came in Parkes Cadman became a national figure. Over the radio on a nation-wide hook-up, he addressed, week by week, the largest congregation in the world, answering questions on moral and religious problems addressed to him from all over America. His catholicity of spirit and his encyclopaedic range of knowledge, as well as his deep human sympathies, equipped him for this



exacting work. He was never stumped by a question. He became an oracle. The story went that a schoolmistress out West offered a prize to her pupils for the most imaginative essay, and it was won by a little girl who wrote, "Once upon a time Dr. Parkes Cadman was asked a question and he said 'I don't know.'" Cadman read everything. He swallowed books—always travelled with a trunk full of books, and returned home with more books bought on his journeys. His ecclesiastical instincts were ecumenical. While John Wesley was his hero, he owned to the spell of John Henry Newman, and had a warm corner in his heart for the Anglo-Catholics. Parkes Cadman had devoted friends among Roman Catholics in New York and among the Jews. I sometimes teased him by saying that he grew to look more and more like a Roman Catholic priest. "Well, it has its advantages, Arthur," he once replied. "I was pulled up in my automobile by a Boston traffic cop one evening, and when I told him I was doing only twenty miles an hour he whispered in a thick Irish voice, "That's all right, Father, but there's a dam Protestant cop at the next corner who would have run you in, sure." Cadman's oratory was resplendent, passionate, thrilling, and he could play on the emotions of a large congregation for an hour on end, and yet never fall from a high intellectual standard of thought. To travel with him was sheer joy. He was full of good stories, and told them inimitably. He collected fine china, and gave it to friends—I have two choice tea-services that Cadman sent me—just for the joy of giving. In interpreting England to America and America to England, Parkes Cadman manfully served the cause of Anglo-American goodwill. He knew better than most people that to have a friend you must be a friend, and he gave this truth an international application.

No American that I know has a profounder understanding of England and the English people than Dr. Lynn Harold Hough, the Dean of the Divinity School of Drew University, Madison, New Jersey. A scholar holding Doctorates of at least ten Universities, an author who has published over thirty books, Dr. Hough has enriched an acute mind by foreign travel, and by cultivating his sympathetic understanding of men and the ways of men. His knowledge of Britain has been gathered during

regular—almost annual—visits for the last twenty-five years. Dr. Hough knows English history and English literature. He understands—as not many Americans do—the historical bases of our ecclesiastical divergencies. Himself a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he has ties of affinity with British Methodism, but he has also a subtle insight into Congregationalism, its traditions, its theologies, and its men, past and present. Once he lectured (without a note) for an hour on Dr. R. W. Dale at Carrs Lane Chapel, Birmingham (where Dale had exercised his great ministry) and astounded his hearers by his exact and exhaustive knowledge of Dale and his contribution to theological thought. Dr. Hough's oratory is of an exceptional order. I heard him give an address at York, twenty years ago, which is still a vivid memory. Dr. Hough not only talks well, but listens well, too. He appreciates, because he understands, the Englishman's meiosis (he says we English understand all the kinds of silence there are) and he never mistakes our reticences for stand-offishness. He has written, in a sentence, one of the nicest things ever said about England—"It has always," he wrote, "been a favourite bit of regretful fantasy with me that the cattle in English fields do not know that they are in England." And could anyone say a kinder thing about England than Dr. Hough's remark (in an address to the students of Drew University) that "the best tale of restrained and friendly power the history of human life on this planet tells is the history of the British Empire." Dr. Hough has made a rich contribution to Anglo-American understanding.

Absence abroad on holiday lost me the opportunity of meeting Dr. Henry Van Dyke, the Presbyterian Minister whom President Woodrow Wilson appointed United States Ambassador at the Hague. Dr. Van Dyke wanted some statistics about Churches in England, and consulted Dr. J. H. Jowett, who was then in New York, as to where he could get them. Dr. Jowett gave him a note of introduction to me in the belief that I would either supply the information, or tell Dr. Van Dyke where to get it. I gathered on returning from my holiday abroad that Dr. Van Dyke had either called at my office, or rung up on the telephone; but I heard nothing more from him. I should have liked to have met this distinguished American, about whom I had heard and read a

good deal. He had been described to me as a diminutive little figure of a man, full of vitality, physical and mental, but somewhat pompous in his manner. A New York journalist who interviewed him said that Dr. Van Dyke was the only man he had ever met who could strut sitting down. Dr. Van Dyke ministered for many years at Brick Presbyterian Church, New York—later the scene of the ministry of my friend Dr. W. P. Merrill, who wrote the popular hymn: "Rise up, ye men of God." Two ladies, visiting Brick Church in Dr. Van Dyke's time, were being placed on the pulpit steps—all other seats being occupied. "But shan't we be conspicuous?" asked one of the ladies. "Madam," answered the usher, "when Dr. Van Dyke preaches no one is conspicuous." During Woodrow Wilson's presidency at Princeton University, Dr. Van Dyke was professor of literature—though he liked to call himself "the encourager of reading." His autobiography is a delightfully self-revealing book, concerned more with fishing and outdoor life than with religion or literature. I liked the candour of a letter he wrote in reply to a lady correspondent who said she had heard, with deep concern, that he sometimes smoked. "Dear Madam," he replied, "It is not true that I sometimes smoke. I always smoke." One good fishing story is linked with Dr. Van Dyke. He had a fishing chalet in the New England mountains. At the end of the lake there was a popular summer hotel. At this hotel a lady visitor gave birth to a baby, and, as is her way with American mothers, she insisted that the baby should be weighed and have its bodily measurements recorded at once. There were no scales in the hotel suitable for weighing a baby: but the proprietor had a brain wave, and sent a man in a boat down to Dr. Van Dyke's chalet to borrow his fishing scales. The baby—according to these scales—weighed twenty-eight pounds!

After serving as an American Army Chaplain in the 1914-1918 war, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick came on a brief visit to England, and made a meteoric preaching and speaking tour. Really it was something like a triumphal march. No American preacher since Henry Ward Beecher received such a welcome wherever he went, or left such an indelible impression by his winsome personality and forceful speech. It is our misfortune

that he has never repeated his visit. His books command a huge *clientèle* on this side of the Atlantic, and vast numbers, inside and outside all the Churches, would rejoice to hear his voice again. Dr. Fosdick was reared as a Baptist. To-day, I think, he would repudiate any denominational label. He ministers at an undenominational Cathedral on Riverside Drive, overlooking the Hudson in New York where (because John D. Rockefeller, junior, is one of his stoutest supporters) it is commonly known as "Rockefeller's Church." There are few Churches like it in the whole wide world—in its catholicity, its broad outlook, and in the restrained splendour of its architecture. Dr. Fosdick is a reconciler of science and religion. He is open-minded enough to recognize that science is a channel of revelation of God and His ways to mankind. One of the bas-reliefs in Riverside Drive Church is a portrait of Einstein. By his sermons and writings and his broadcasts over the radio Dr. Fosdick is widening the minds of men from the Atlantic to the Pacific. No modern preacher, I think, has such a world-wide following.

Dr. Fosdick is splendid company, vivacious, humorous, and human. When he invited me to lunch at the Union Club in New York, he mentioned slyly that some distinguished New Yorker had died in every chair in the Club. We talked for two hours, and exchanged stories and experiences, and the hours flashed by like minutes. Dr. Fosdick loves England and, unlike most Americans, delights in our archaic ways. How he roared with laughter when I told him the history of the platoon of Guards that he had seen march through London one evening on their way to the Bank of England. The story is that, in 1848, when revolutions were breaking out all over Europe, the Governor of the Bank of England got alarmed, and sent an urgent request that a file of Guards should be detailed to keep watch and ward over the Bank. The soldiers were sent. The revolutionary mood in Europe passed. There was no dangerous unrest in London, but, somehow the Governor forgot to cancel the order for the presence of the soldiers, and they have gone on doing "guard duty" at the Bank to this day. The story amused Dr. Fosdick immensely, but he quickly recognized that there is method in British madness when I pointed out that the Bank of

England likes the prestige of being guarded by the very pick of our soldiers, that the Government are saved the soldiers' pay and board, that the soldiers like the easy job, comfortable quarters, and good food provided at the Bank, and that the War Office likes the nightly parade to the Bank since it stimulates recruiting.

I think it was Dr. Fosdick who told me of a schoolboy's version of an episode in English history, thus, "When Sir Walter Raleigh took off his cloak, and threw it on the ground so that Queen Elizabeth should not have to walk in the mud, the Queen said, 'Sir Walter, you have made a mess of your nice cloak,' and Sir Walter replied '*Dieu et mon Droit*,' which means 'My God! you're right.'"

The "Group Movement" found England in just the mood for welcoming something novel in the way of Christian evangelism. Moreover, the movement made a frontal attack upon a stratum of society hitherto untouched (except sixty years ago by Henry Drummond) by evangelistic campaigns. Somebody called it "a Salvation Army in dress clothes." Some estimable people have found in it the lost joy (as Dr. Deissmann once called it) of Christian living. I have never quite made up my mind whether Buchmanism is a food, or only a pick-me-up. The sense of spiritual superiority it seems to breed in some of its votaries is amenable: but I have friends who have become much more charming since they came under the spell of Dr. Buchman. All that I had heard from America about Buchmanism before it invaded England made me cautious about committing myself to its advocacy—though Dr. Buchman through his cleverly organized groupers made desperate efforts to secure my attendance—as editor of "The Christian World"—at week-end Group gatherings. One ardent grouper, just down from the University, sought me out in my club one day, to tell me that by withholding the support of "The Christian World" from the Group Movement I was committing the sin against the Holy Ghost. Such methods of propaganda froze any sympathy I had with the 'groupers.'

On the only occasion when I met Dr. Buchman he chilled me. A group of editors of London religious papers was invited

to meet Dr. Buchman for luncheon at Anderton's Hotel. I did not fall under the spell which "Frank" is said by his devotees to cast over everyone he meets. And his speech exasperated me. He made an unblushing appeal to the editors of the religious papers to support the Group Movement because it would be profitable: it would increase their circulations. He cited, as proof, the case of one Anglican religious weekly which had added thousands to its circulation by espousing the Group Movement. I was certainly not alone in my revulsion from such a mercenary approach. I gather that certain features which repelled many religious people in England, and had aroused strong opposition in two American Universities, have now been eliminated, or at least, brought under restraint—I refer to the confessions about sexual lapses made in mixed group meetings. What would, I think, have disturbed me at a Group week-end party would have been the affected hilarity and fussy matiness which (I gathered from friends who had attended) gave these Group house-parties an atmosphere of "religion on the spree." The Group insistence on groupers ransacking their past lives for trivial little offences inspired the limerick:

"There was a young lady named Roup  
Who said, 'Now I *am* in the soup,  
I can't think of a sin  
'That's worth bringing in,  
And I'm due at a Buchmanite group.'"

Dr. Buchman's unfortunate "Thank God for Adolf Hitler," and his reference to Goering as "a great lad," coupled with the persistent efforts of some of his English disciples in America to evade being drafted for military service, have left the Group Movement with some things to "live down," in the years ahead.

## A HIGHROAD TO FRIENDSHIP

*Understanding Americans through their humour—Some American stories*

EVER since my first visit to the United States, now fifty years ago, I have sought to understand the American people better by forging friendships with Americans, by reading American history, biography, poetry, fiction, and newspapers, and by cultivating an appreciation of American humour. It is a pet theory of mine that if you can laugh with a man you are on the highroad to friendship, and it is also my firm belief that if you laugh at a man you may make a mortal enemy. I go so far as to say that the most divisive factor in Anglo-American relationships is that both nations speak the Anglo-Saxon tongue, and so can misunderstand each other too easily. But do they speak the same language? Yes, but with a very important difference. The American language changes and expands rapidly. Americans have a genius for coining words and phrases distinctively their own, and English words take on new American meanings with bewildering suddenness. As Mr. H. W. Horwill says in the preface to his admirable and most useful book on "Modern American Usage," "few of us, perhaps, realize what a subtle and frequent cause of misunderstanding lurks in the fact that so many familiar words are used in America with a different meaning, or, at any rate, with a different implication from that which they bear in England." Nor are these "differences in linguistic idiom," as Mr. Horwill calls them, surprising. They are explained by the peculiarly composite character of the people of the United States. America is less a nation than a congeries of nations. In New York, which it has been said, was settled by the Dutch, conquered by the English, owned by the Jews, and governed by the Irish, there are more Jews than in Jerusalem, more Italians than in Rome, more Irish than in Dublin, more Germans than in Hamburg, and fewer Englishmen than in Birmingham. And now a huge negro colony has established itself in Harlem. One

of Dr. J. H. Jowett's greatest surprises when he settled in New York was when he counted newspapers in eleven different languages displayed on a news-stand in East Forty-Second Street, and when he found on entering a street car that only one of his fellow passengers was reading a paper printed in English. The most startling revelation of the swiftness with which changes take place in America came to me in Plymouth, Mass., when I asked five different men to direct me to the Pilgrim Fathers Memorial Church and found that none of them could do so. Foreign-born immigrants, they had never heard of the Pilgrim Fathers.

The American brand of humour has grown out of this conglomeration of peoples. It has a tang of its own—sometimes even a grotesqueness of its own. But it conforms to Hobbes's definition of humour as "sudden glory" due to "incongruity in congruity." It has flash and surprise—qualities in which Americans find much English humour deficient. A small mixed group of Englishmen and Americans were discussing the differences they noticed in the two nations. One American said that Americans thought English people were slow in the uptake—they did not see the point of a joke unless it pricked them. One of the Englishmen rather resentfully denied the soft impeachment, and dismissed it as ridiculous. A few minutes later an American told a story about a man who went into a restaurant in Boston, told the waitress he wanted a good quick lunch, and asked her what they had got on the menu. She replied, "We've got thick soup, clam chowder, fried chicken, grilled cutlets, apple tart, pumpkin pie, vanilla ice, cheese straws, and coffee." "Right," said the customer, "bring me thick soup, clam chowder, fried chicken, grilled cutlets, pumpkin pie, vanilla ice, cheese straws, and black coffee." "Here," said the waitress, "what's wrong with our apple tart?" All the men present laughed at the story, except the one Englishman who had hotly repudiated the idea that an Englishman is slow to see a joke. He looked blankly at the narrator for a moment, and then asked, "Well, but what *was* wrong with the apple tart?"

The most characteristic American story I can recall is this. When William Jennings Bryan stood for the third time as a



candidate for the Presidency of the United States, and for the third time was emphatically rejected, he met his Electoral Campaign Committee and told this story. A man went to the front door of a dancing saloon out West and the girl in the pay box would not sell him a ticket. He went to the side door, and the doorkeeper ordered him out. He went to the back door, and the manager kicked him out. Sitting outside on the pavement, and rubbing his bruised quarters, he meditatively observed, "I see what it is. They can't deceive me. These guys don't *want* me to come to their dance." The brakeman on an American train stood on the platform at the end of the last car watching a little dog chasing the train as it left the depot and barking furiously. "Gee!" said the brakeman, "and I wonder what the devil he'll do with it if he catches it?" Two Americans were discussing the death of a wealthy friend. "He was worth half a million dollars," said one. The other asked, "Who to?"

Dining together two American friends reached the dessert course. One, eating an apple, examined every piece scrupulously before putting it into his mouth. "Does it make you mad," asked his companion, "to come on a worm in an apple?" "No," was the reply, "what makes me mad is to come on half a worm." A salvage boat sent out to help a vessel in distress at sea returned to port, and the master made his report thus: "In spite of all the help we were able to give through the speaking trumpet the ship foundered, and the crew was lost." Columbia University, New York, has a very strong Jewish element among its students. This gives the point to a letter addressed by a girl to her parents in the Middle West saying: "We have got a nice apartment right opposite the doorway of Columbia College where we can watch the coming and going of the Gentile students—both of them."

A traveller making his first railway journey down to the Southern States of America, was in some doubt about the tip he ought to give to the negro attendant who made up his bed in the sleeping car. He asked the negro, "What is the average tip given you on this railroad?" "A dollar, sar," answered the negro unhesitatingly. It seemed excessive, but next morning the traveller handed a dollar bill to the negro, who grinned ex-

pansively and said, "Thank you, sar, that's a mighty fine tip, sar." "But you told me last night," replied the traveller, "that a dollar was the average tip." "Yes sar," answered the beaming negro, "but you are the very first gentleman that has ever come up to the average." A negro maid-servant who had been given a day off to go to the wedding of two young coloured folk, told her mistress next day all about the great event—what the bride wore, what the bridesmaids had on, what they ate, the games they played at the party and the wonders of the wedding cake. "But," said her mistress, "you haven't told me anything about the bridegroom. What was he like?" "Oh, mum, do you know?" replied the girl, "that derved old nigger nebber turned up at all." A film company offered a prize for a brief scenario for a film, stipulating that it must contain religion, society, humour, action, and sex. "Here's your scenario," wrote one competitor. "It meets all your requirements: 'Heavens!' laughed the Duchess, 'stop pinching my leg.'" A small town Middle West newspaper proprietor wanted the biggest type in the printing office used to headline the report of an American victory in France. "Is that the very largest headline type you've got?" he asked the foreman printer. "Well," replied the printer, hesitatingly, "I have one a size larger, but I wanted to save that for the Second Coming of the Lord." An American preacher, disturbed by what he regarded as the indelicacy of the modern woman's evening dresses, seized the opportunity to say in an after dinner speech, that "Mother Eve was made conscious of her naked condition by eating an apple." Whereupon the chairman rose and said, "Boys, pass the fruit to the ladies."

Philadelphia, once a somewhat drowsy Quaker city, has been the butt for humour. "Have you any children?" an American is said to have enquired of another. "Five sons. Four living and one in Philadelphia." Pasadena claims to be the loveliest city in the U.S.A. A new arrival in Heaven (so a story runs) was surprised to find souls in chains. On asking the reason why, he was told: "Well, you see, they came from Pasadena, and we figure it out that they're better put in chains because they may try to escape and get back to Pasadena." Liza Lehmann tells of being at a party in California when a fashionable young man, talking

to a girl, saw a middle-aged lady, with peroxide-blond hair and heavily powdered complexion come into the room. "Just look," he said, "at the freak that has just blown in." The girl looked, and then said, "That's my mother." "Oh is it?" replied the young man, quite unabashed. "But you should just see mine."

When Mr. Thomas Dewey, who was only 44, accepted nomination as Republican candidate for the Presidency, a Democrat remarked in public that "Mr. Dewey has sure thrown his diaper into the ring." Will Rogers, the famous columnist, was asked to give a testimonial to a certain make of American piano. "Dear Sirs," he wrote, "I guess your pianos are the best I have ever leaned against." Billy Sunday, the revivalist, said during an evangelistic campaign that "the brink of the grave is strewn with the wooden heels of dancing girls' slippers, the butt ends of expensive cigarettes, and the gilded corks of champagne bottles." One of the Chicago newspapers printed these words, adding: "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?" The same evangelist, preaching in New York, declared that there were women going about Fifth Avenue "without enough clothes on to make a pair of running pants for a humming bird."

A negro minister preaching on the Genesis story of the Fall said, "Now when Adam and Eve had eaten the apple they heard a rustling in the garden. They knowed it was the Lord, so they scuttered behind a bush. But the Lord scuttered faster, and he caught Adam and Eve by the scruff of the neck, and said, 'Adam, you been eating apples.' Adam said, 'No, Lord.' Then the Lord said, 'Eve, you been eating apples.' 'I deed, I ain't,' said Eve. Then the Lord was wroth, and he shook Adam and Eve by the scruff of the neck, and said, 'If neither of you chil'n's been eating apples what's the meaning of the apple cores under the bush over there?'" Smithers, a Baltimore literary critic, who had a pronounced stammer, was met by a friend in Central Park, New York. Smithers said he had "j-j-j-just b-b-been for a w-w-w-walk u-up Fif-fth Av-venue." "Why, Smithers," said his friend, "you stammer more in New York than you do in Baltimore." "B-big-g-ger p-place!" replied Smithers. A man

with a grievance against a newspaper walked into the editorial office and shot the editor dead in his chair. The assistant editor, looking up, remarked, "Young man, if you go about doing tricks like that you'll get yourself disliked."

Whenever a white man goes into a negro Church it is the signal for a collection to be taken. A negro preacher seeing a white man in his congregation paused, and said, "Deacon Jones will now take up the collection," and he handed his big-brimmed felt hat to the deacon for the purpose. The coloured deacon slipped quickly along the pews where the negroes sat, but hovered long and expectantly when he came to the white man. Then he returned to the platform and handed the hat to the minister, who examined it carefully, turned it upside down on the table, and then resignedly remarked, "Well thank the Lord, brethren, I've got my hat back."

An American tourist—an "innocent abroad"—gained an audience with the Pope, and greeted His Holiness with an exuberance unusual at the Vatican. "I'm proud to meet Your Holiness," he said. "I knew your father, the late Pope." An American lady "doing" India, writing home from Agra, said that the loveliest sight she had seen in all her travels was "the Aga Khan in the moonlight." From Dr. Nehemiah Boynton's fund of typically American stories I take my final example: After Adam and Eve had eaten the forbidden fruit and been driven out of the garden, Adam one day took Cain and Abel for a walk and stopped outside the gates of Eden. "Look boys," he said, "that's where your mother ate us out of house and home."

American humour as I have tried to show, has emphatically a spice of its own. But to understand it opens a gateway to understanding Americans. And who can exaggerate the importance to the future of the world of Anglo-American understanding?

## CREDO

HAPPY as my life has been—though it has not been without its tragedies—I should be nearing harbour in a mood of despair, but for a few fundamental beliefs which serve me as my anchorage, and survive in my soul amid all the chaos of to-day. To me they are—to borrow a phrase familiar on the lips of our grand-parents—saving truths. I omit from my “Credo” those beliefs that I do not live by. But these are the beliefs that I do live by, and, in setting them forth, I expressly and deliberately avoid theological and philosophical jargon.

I believe that behind and above everything there is a Great Mind and Will which, notwithstanding human pain and nature’s apparent cruelty (of which I think we make too much) is friendly to man, and is indeed, summed up in the words “The Spirit of Love.” I cannot always find God—i.e. love—in nature, even in the star-spangled heavens, but I find God expressing Himself in man—in a Grenfell or a Gandhi, a Schweitzer, or a Kagawa and in all those who lay down their lives for their friends. And (though I cannot conquer my doubts about direct divine interventions overruling natural laws) I believe that God is always invading man in the realm of the spirit, and using man to promote His Kingdom of love on earth. I believe that God incorporated his Spirit to a unique degree—so unique that the difference in degree sets up a difference in kind—into the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who, human as we all are in material senses, embodied the Divine Spirit, and lived the Divine Life on the human plane so fully that we through Him see God Himself—see, indeed, the Word made flesh, see God (as one of the early Fathers said) “becoming what we are, that we may become what He is.”

I believe God spoke to man through Jesus as He had never spoken through the prophets and as He has never spoken since. That to me is the “given” element in the Gospel of Christianity. It is the very core of my faith that the Gospel is itself an Act of

God on behalf of man, to which man must make his own voluntary response. Against Jesus the men of His age (especially the orthodox religious leaders of His own nation) hurled every vindictive word and deed that wicked men are capable of devising, and I am afraid that they would do it again if He came again. He was belied, despised, tortured, unjustly tried, and judicially murdered: but his spirit of love was not broken. I see through His Cross the love of God streaming dramatically as it has always streamed, and still streams, though we "with our estranged faces" often "miss the many splendoured thing." So at the Cross I find the loving, forgiving, and redeeming God, the Father of my soul.

Not even death on the Cross could crush the conquering spirit of love. To the cowed and broken disciples of Jesus there came an experience convincing them that Jesus was not killed, could not be killed, was living with them still, and would go on living with them for ever. That fact of experience of the living Christ made the Church. On that rock Christianity was built, and by preaching it far and wide the disciples turned the world upside down. I believe that the same mystical experience, out of which the disciples were reborn, may be the experience of all men and women who yield themselves to the spirit of the living Christ. It was this experience that made out of Saul the Persecutor, Paul the great evangelist of the first century. It was this experience that sent Wilfred Grenfell to Labrador, and made Albert Schweitzer cast away his European pre-eminence as a scholar, theologian, and musician, in order to work in the spirit of love as a medical missionary in the pestilential swamps of Equatorial Africa.

Against this not unreasonable and still operative faith (which I, at least, can live by), I find the storms of modern science beat in vain. To me it is sufficiently adequate a faith to bring an inner peace that is not disturbed by any dread of cataclysmic changes in material civilization. I feel that, with it, I can face any to-morrow.

I do not believe that Christianity can offer men any promise of material reward for their goodness and discipleship. Righteousness, whatever the Psalmists may say, is not necessarily

the path to prosperity. God has no preferential treatment here for the godly. He sends His sunshine and His rain upon the unrighteous as well as the righteous. Righteousness is not an insurance policy against pain, disease, sorrow, or disaster. The fear of hell has passed from the minds of men, and Heaven as commonly depicted makes no appeal to the mind of to-day. I am not sure that immortality is desired very ardently by many people, though perhaps most of us hope for some survival of personality after physical death. I myself have long ceased to concern myself with problems of the future life. It is enough for me to believe that when I die I shall be dying in the arms of a loving God.

What Christianity, as I see it, can promise is a peace of mind that the world cannot give—that peace that passeth all understanding. The Kingdom of Heaven is within us here—as is also the Kingdom of Hell. I believe that this age which disparages mere authority respects the fine fruits of religion. A truly good man whose Christianity radiates from his life is the very best Christian advocate. "The man that doeth good is of God." And I believe that wherever we find Truth, Beauty, and Love, we see God expressing Himself—for those spiritual values must be the attributes of the Father of all our souls, the fullness of whose glory we see reflected in Jesus Christ.

*September, 1944*

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